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*Edited by
George Jean Nathan
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To One Who Sings in Silver

By Leonora Speyer

I KNOW of a song all iron and lead,
But I will sing it in silver instead.

My thoughts are cinders scattered and gray,
I'll speak them in stars of the Milky Way.

I who have drunk of a dream—too deep!—
Will drink my thirst as I fall asleep.

And because of an echo that aches of a cry,
I'll make of my body a lullaby.

I will sow a sobbing, and reap a mirth,
Be gay with a grief that is sweet as earth.

Because of the fire! Because of the fire!
I shall hug the scars of a burnt desire:

Mingle my sins with a Sabbath chime,
Jingle my heart like a nursery rhyme.

*Singer of silver! Winger of woe!
I shall make music wherever I go!*

The
SMART SET
The
Aristocrat
Among
Magazines



Bachelor of Arts

By William Seagle

AFTER four long years, he graduated. To the commencement exercises came his father and mother, brother and sister, uncle and aunt.

He listened to the president of the university tell him and his fellow graduates that with their training they were in a sense the elect, and that the state expected much of them. When his turn came, he marched up and received his diploma tied with a blue ribbon. At his very first opportunity he looked at it and found it to be a fine piece of parchment inscribed in Latin. Hurriedly, he glanced through it . . . "omnibus et singulis ad quos praesentes litterae pervenerint salutem sciatis nos . . . Philip Sanders . . . cum exercitationes omnes ad gradum Baccalaurei in Artibus . . . dedisse et concessisse in cuius rei plenius testimonium chirographis. . . .

He stopped.

Making his excuses, he rushed up to his room, locked himself in, and went to work on the diploma with a Latin dictionary.



Vale

By Lila Sanberg

WHEN I die I shall be sorry to leave this most perfect of all worlds. But one thought remains to temper my grief. Once and for all shall I be rid of women who are eager to sin with Bill Hart and Rabindranath Tagore; of men who remove their hats in the presence of a banker; of insurance solicitors; of Massenet and the creators of such tidbits as "Will You Be My Woola Down in Willa Walla Land?"; of advertising banditti who attend conventions where highway robbery is openly discussed; of people who sign petitions and serve on committees; of newspapers featuring the speeches of such glittering fish as Alderman O'Reilly, Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler and the President of the Dancing Masters' Association of America; of

school teachers who believe that Luddendorf somehow had something to do with the American Revolution; of college dons who believe in the high calling and lofty purpose of statesmanship; of Socialists; of Otto H. Kahn; of intellectuals who think that chewing gum is vulgar but that reading the *Literary Digest* is perfectly nice; of critics who discover a new Goethe once a month; of Boston *Transcript* book reviewers; of divines who tell their flocks that to be virtuous is to be happy; of writers who believe that the life of the average tramp must be one hell of an interesting proposition, and of men who believe that the South Sea Island women are fair-skinned, flaming creatures who haunt the docks waiting for disembarking white men.



IT is when he starts coming home late for dinner that a woman gets suspicious of her husband. It is when he starts coming home early to dinner that a man gets suspicious of his wife.



TO many people the sole result of Prohibition is that they now think in terms of pints instead of in terms of quarts.



Another Cactus Blooms

[*A Complete Novelette*]

By Sarah Addington

CHAPTER I

MISS MARIANNA TITWILER entered Sociology 42A and selected a seat in the first row facing the Great Professor's desk. The room was empty with that peculiar emptiness of schoolrooms whose barrenness is but dubiously relieved by photographs of dead cities, busts of dead philosophers, and chalked footprints of dead lessons on the blackboard. But for Miss Titwiler the stale air stirred with a rare zest. For it was in this schoolroom, at this very moment, that the most audacious hope of her life was in the process of coming true, that incredible, presumptuous dream of hers, harbored for fifteen years—a term off, New York, and the Great Professor!

And now she was actually here. His desk was there. Soon he would come and speak. Miss Titwiler, unaccustomed to great moments, was unnerved. She closed her eyes, as if, living so long with the mist of the future in them, she could scarcely face the glory of reality. She opened them as a clatter down the hall announced the coming of other pupils.

They came in, a slow, straggling stream. Miss Titwiler saw big, bald-headed men, with flabby, genial faces, slovenly clothes and gold spectacles, who looked to her practised eye like principals and superintendents; and they were. She saw a brown-skinned man, his eyes like hot coals, and wondered at him; for Miss Titwiler had never before been at school with every race under the sun. A smallish woman who had remembered to use crimpers

on her tan hair, but had forgotten to pin up her black sateen petticoat under her tan skirt, took a seat near Miss Titwiler, removed her coat with ink-covered fingers, and dived into a book. Another woman, something like her, shivered as she sat down, and pulled her ugly knitted jacket of faded blue more closely around her. A fat Chinese shambled in; he walked as if he had no bones and might gently spread out and ooze away any minute. A group of close-browed Jews made their way to the back of the room, talking earnestly as they went. An undersized woman, no longer young, flopped down into her seat with a little spring. Her pert white stocking-cap made her ridiculous, pathetic, yet somehow through the nose glasses that pinched up a hump of flesh between her brows, her eyes looked out on the world, sweetly, candidly. A young woman of conspicuous coiffure sat down beside Miss Titwiler. She had dull eyes, dark teeth, a slippery mouth, and Miss Titwiler unreasonably hated her. Her presence in some way seemed to lower the intellectual temperature of the room. A fresh-cheeked boy, a pretty Jewish girl, another smallish woman whose black sateen petticoat showed at the back, more principals, a Japanese, dainty as a toy, more superintendents, on they came—and then the cautious buzz of the class was suddenly stilled.

Miss Titwiler's heart stood on end. The Great Professor must be here!

She turned her eyes to the platform where, behind the desk, stood a small man, short-waisted, narrow-shouldered. His little blue suit was neat to the last crease, his mustard-colored mustache

was trimmed to the last hair. Against the smallness of his person gleamed a great Phi Beta Kappa key. A timid smile curled his nostrils and was gone.

The girl next to Miss Titwiler snickered and fire leaped to Miss Titwiler's eyes as she turned to glare at her. He was still the Great Professor, and her own wave of disappointment was quickly succeeded by a fresh flood of loyalty and devotion. He was the man whose books she had studied—and taught—for fifteen years. He was celebrated beyond perhaps any other sociologist in this country, perhaps even in the world! Miss Titwiler sat very straight in her chair, but her heart was on its knees.

He had begun to speak.

"All members of this class desiring credit must successfully pass . . ."

Then he was off.

"The interpretations of history are several: theological, economic, psychological. The economic interpretation presupposes man as an enlightened self-seeker, following a calculus of utilities. The psychological interpretation denies this rationality . . ."

Miss Titwiler listened blissfully. This was the rarefied atmosphere for which she had been panting. She liked to feel the impact of ideas, ideas, ideas coming in orderly sequence from a thoughtful mind. She liked even the very phraseology of science. "Calculus of utilities" had a thrill all its own, though she knew not what it meant; or rather, because she knew not what it meant. She was exultant as she put query marks after unfamiliar words and allusions. Here was research worth while. There was so much to learn!

The professor lent himself to a mild pleasantry, and when he laughed with upcurling nostrils, Miss Titwiler, in her rapture, laughed even a bit too loud perhaps. He spoke in a monotone, his only emphasis achieved by a twist of his mouth to one side, as if he pulled out the meaning of his words thereby. Miss Titwiler considered his delivery masterful.

At the sound of a bell half an hour later, he stopped, flushed, then finished

his sentence, laid a pencil down on the desk with careful precision, and departed. A buzz immediately set up. "I didn't understand" . . . "list of books" . . . "ancestor worship" . . . "but Darwin says" . . .

The girl next to Miss Titwiler got up noisily to change her seat. She joined a shallow-faced girl across the room, laughed loudly with her for a while, then began to stare about her, coolly whistling beneath her dark teeth.

"Bold," said Miss Titwiler to herself. "Glad she moved."

The next period was another hour of sheer ecstasy, as the October sun slanted lower and lower and the professor talked on and on. Finally he stopped and asked for questions, and it was to Miss Titwiler's amazement that a dozen hands were flung into the air at once. She wanted desperately to ask a question, but how dared she in that roomful before the Great Professor? She raised a numb hand once but snatched it back to her side again, cold at her own daring.

A transported student of sociology went home later in the day to a street flippantly known to undergraduates as Hairpin Alley, a gray, unlovely cavern of cobblestones, garbage cans, coal heaps and stealthy cats, set between two dark rows of old buildings, where a thousand or so women students eat and sleep, and study themselves gray-haired. It is to the ordinary eye a sordid, ugly street, but to Miss Titwiler, as she trod it that afternoon, the dirty cobblestones shimmered with magic, and as she skirted garbage cans, she saw nothing but the beauty of a world that could produce Sociology 42A.

In her room, a small, dark cranny made somehow livable with yellow stuffs and white paint, she dined on graham crackers and milk, fare that was to her a cup running over. Later, in bed, she bent an ear to the sounds of the apartment and wondered all kinds of things about her neighbors. The telephone rang. People passed her door every hour with rubber-heeled tread. She heard the sudden swish of water

in the bath, the hum of conversation, a rift of laughter, the doorbell. . . .

Miss Titwiler had never been so completely alone, yet in her solitude, unrelieved and enveloping as it was, she had an odd snug sense of companionship, of communion. She was utterly strange in a new world, yet she had never felt so much at home. It was as if she had at last found her place in the universe, after a lifetime of exile. Miss Titwiler did not reflect that that place was only the narrowest possible groove in a New York apartment, that she was the smallest possible unit of a great university. She felt, for the first time in her life, that she was a component part of a vast and beautiful whole. Her head hummed with happiness.

CHAPTER II

THE next evening Miss Titwiler suffered the devastating experience of dining within five feet of the Great Professor.

Not always had this chosen dining-hall been devoted solely to the low business of filling human stomachs three times a day. Once, when it was an apartment of gentility and culture, it had pictures on its walls, closets full of ladies' frocks, music of evenings, and Sunday prayers. But alas, now not only the pictures were gone, but the walls were, too, and there was hardly an echo of culture left in the large, crowded, noisy room, whose floor was bare, whose lights were high and bright, whose food, piled on trays, disappeared like snow under the fierce hunger of the jabbering student population.

But Miss Titwiler found no fault with the scene. To her the cheerful clatter of dishes, the noise of fifty students, the odors of gravy, coffee, soup, were all inviting—until her eyes fell on the Great Professor. And then her panic was a terrible thing, an earthquake that shook her to the roots, and made her knees flap under her skirt like rags in a wind. Such intensity of feeling was unbecoming, however real, and Miss Titwiler, following the au-

thoritative forefinger of a dame of pomp and girth, struggled to recover herself. The forefinger had brought her to a seat, and as she sank into it she saw that her table was next to the Great Professor's, and that he was talking to four or five women.

"It's about sociology," she thought rapturously, and strained an ear to hear without seeming to. The words she caught were not sociological: "very comfortable"; "higher prices"; "office hours." Celebrity had stepped down a notch, it seemed, and Miss Titwiler, far from disappointed, rejoiced that the eminent one could pass thus easily from science to Hairpin Alley and be at home. He raised his eyes once and seemed to look straight at her. Her own glance wandered all over the room in her confusion. Later, he laughed, that laugh that sniffed the air and seemed to smell something.

Miss Titwiler had been hungry, but dining off the hem of the great proved too exciting, and four poor, brave courses came and went, to have their surfaces but scratched. Even that crowning triumph, a fleck of white of egg, basely pretending to the throne of whipped cream, failed to make its mark, and Miss Titwiler pushed back her chocolate pudding and went out. The price, which she had not known, stunned her, and she knew she could never come again.

In her room, she horrified herself by a sudden picture of herself as the wife of the Great Professor.

"Oh!" she gasped in terror. "I'm wild!"

But she saw his neat little suit in the closet next to her coat, and at this vision, gasped again.

"Goodness," she breathed, "this is terrible."

What a life they would have, ran on her thoughts, defiant of her conscience, long days of study and work, evenings of talk, reading; she would help him in his work. . . .

She jumped up from her chair and rushed about the tiny room, trying to shake off the obsession. . . . It was

like having a man in the room with her, this lurid, persistent fancy. . . . She was indecent. . . . But the little man who was such a great professor stayed with her. . . . What would the other women in the apartment think if they knew? . . . She dared not undress because he was there. . . . How *had* she become obscene like this all in a flash?

"Oh, what a woman I am!" she snorted with disgust. And finally good sense drove out the little man, leaving only an astonished, ashamed woman, whose sin lay like lead on her heart.

"Well, it's lucky I can't afford that dining-room," said her terrified conscience as she tried to sleep. But her crazy heart was sorry, sorry, sorry, and yet somehow freakishly glad that it could be sorry!

CHAPTER III

THE days went along. Miss Titwiler went to English 12B, where a young professor discoursed to nobody but his bride in the front row, while she, worshipping with dark eyes, made it quite clear that for sheer intellect, this young man, in her opinion, held the palm, unrivalled and without competition. Miss Titwiler went to English 247 and learned, to her amazement, that the theater is but a child of the church, born long ago—a revolutionary idea to Miss Titwiler, but she took it to her bosom with rash alacrity. This was the very sort of thing she had come to a university for! She studied long hours of every day under the dome of the library, and she found a new restaurant, cheap.

The profane image that had invaded her decent room came no more, but its memory stayed, and the penitential fires burned every day at the shame and humiliation of that scene.

One day a hand was laid on her arm as a hearty voice asked her to slow up. She turned to see a jolly, important-looking woman who invited her, without any waste of words, to have tea with her at the Woman's Graduate Club.

"Oh!" Miss Titwiler's keen eyes lighted up behind her nose-glasses. "I didn't know there was one. I'd love to. You really—want me?"

This woman looked suspiciously like a Ph.D., and Miss Titwiler declared to herself that her good luck seemed to be endless.

"Of course," answered the woman. "Come. Let's try to beat the mob. I'm not the build to sit on the floor myself. Too fat."

Miss Titwiler laughed light-heartedly, and they started out, these two, like old friends. The Woman's Graduate Club was not yet launched upon its busy hour, a condition greeted by the hostess with a cheerful whoop.

"Come sit on this marshmallow sofa," she commanded. "It's the kind that makes you want to leave home. I'll get the tea. No, sit still." Miss Titwiler was left to marvel at the comfort of a marshmallow sofa and the briskness of certain middle-aged females, as the woman gathered up tea cups, scraps of lemon and crackers. She came, with hands full, and sat down beside her guest.

"Now," said she. "Don't tell me you don't like sugar, 'cause it's already in. Easier to carry."

Miss Titwiler didn't like sugar, but she nodded a joyous affirmation.

"Let's talk about our betters," went on the other. "I like that little man that lectured in sociology last week, don't you? That's where I first saw you, you know. Oh, by the way, my name is Waters, Euphemia Waters. I live on Riverside Drive. Sounds dressy, but it isn't, I assure you, for four of us live together like cheerful pigs. Never have time to clean up things, of course. You—?"

"Marianna Titwiler," she answered with willing promptness.

"Ph. D.?"

"Oh my goodness, no," replied Miss Titwiler aghast. "Just one term, I guess. Are—you?"

Euphemia Waters grunted.

"Um, I suppose so. It's really frightfully hard work, though. I'm not sure

it pays. But I got my leave of absence to do it, so I shall have to see it through!"

She mentioned a small Massachusetts college where she was head of English.

"I teach English, too!" exclaimed Miss Titwiler delightedly. "But I wanted to take sociology because of Professor Hutchinson. I give a course on his books, too, though we don't have sociology, that is, real sociology, in our high school. He's wonderful, isn't he?"

Euphemia Waters looked at her.

"You didn't think—you don't think that was he we heard the other day, do you?"

Miss Titwiler stared.

"'Cause it wasn't, you know. That was little Bennett, one of the assistants. He's only a near-great, but he's all right, I think—"

Miss Titwiler, dumbfounded, finally managed to speak.

"Are you sure?" she protested. "Why, I thought—"

"You didn't read the bulletin board. Hutchinson was out on a lecture tour. He's back now. Will appear at class tomorrow."

No, Miss Titwiler had not read the bulletin board. She didn't even know there was one.

"But wait until you see and hear the great Hutch. He's the hero that he ought to be, fine voice, big, red-headed, dramatic. Poor little Bennett suffers by comparison, but I like him."

"So do I," agreed Miss Titwiler a little too heartily. "I thought he was wonderful."

She wondered, idiotically, if Euphemia Waters could ever have been guilty of such imaginings—no, Euphemia was florid, brisk, convivial. She would never lie on a cot and see a man's clothes hanging in her closet. Miss Titwiler vaguely heard what Euphemia was saying and came to reality with a jerk. Euphemia was offering to put up her name for membership to the Woman's Graduate Club.

"You'd get acquainted with everybody, and once a month we have a big meeting, with some celeb to speak."

"I'm afraid—I mean, I'm sure I can't afford it," said Miss Titwiler. "I'd love to, but—"

"It's five dollars," said Euphemia Waters, and went on hastily, "Oh, we're all as poor as poison around here, of course. Why *will* people study and be shabby and hungry and happy? I've hocked my Liberty bonds, sold the family pearls, which happened to be mahogany, and borrowed from my needy parents to come here, and yet, my soul, I feel as jolly as if I had a million."

"So do I," Miss Titwiler concurred with warm understanding.

She did not tell her own little epic of sweat-and-dreams, that long fifteen years of teaching, of saving, of helping endless relatives, of Chautauqua teachers' courses, of summer sessions and normal schools, of planning and hoping and making ready, of deferring, and then of beginning all over again.

But she did not need to tell it, for Euphemia Waters knew. Miss Titwiler's skimpy immaculateness, her repression that was habit and her ready enthusiasm that was instinct, all told the tale her proud tongue would not vouchsafe. And, indeed, it was because Euphemia had seen at first sight the whole history in every seam of Miss Titwiler's old, brushed clothes, in every movement of her long, slight body, in every change on her eager, sensitive face, that she had sought Miss Titwiler out to be "nice" to her.

"And I'm going to do worse," went on Euphemia Waters. "I'm going to Oxford—sometime."

"Oh, my!" Miss Titwiler's adventurous soul had never so much as dreamed of other climes.

"Somehow I feel as if England were the end of the rainbow." Euphemia smiled humorously. "English novels have gone to my head, you see. But it's real. And when I have reached Oxford, I will be ready to die!"

Miss Titwiler nodded in sympathy.

"That's the way," she began timidly, "that's the way I felt about New York!"

When I saw the first factories, I wanted to—hug them!”

She blushed at her own confession.

“And yet it wasn’t factories you wanted at all,” finished the other. “Well, go ahead and hug your New York, my dear. It’s better than hugging some worthless man. And a woman’s got to hug something, you know.”

At this merciless pursuit of her own unfortunate figure of speech, Miss Titwiler waxed warmer.

“And I’d rather be chasing the good girl, learning, all over the world than most representatives of that noble sex, the male.”

When they went out, a few minutes later, through the mass of women now crowding the room, Euphemia rebuked herself.

“I didn’t introduce you to a soul! Well, you’ll come again, won’t you? Bye. See you in class tomorrow.”

Miss Titwiler’s head floated with a jumble of impressions: “A woman’s got to hug something”; Euphemia Waters was going to Oxford; he was not the Great Professor, after all; five dollars might possibly be squeezed from somewhere; his name was Bennett and he was an assistant; Euphemia understood what it meant to go to a university; but Euphemia was wrong about men; it was natural for women to like men; how glad she was that he was not the Great Professor; maybe . . .

She shook her shoulders angrily.

“Fool,” she muttered.

An envelope marked “W G C” was slipped in Miss Titwiler’s handkerchief box that night. It contained three dimes and two nickels, the price of dinner. Euphemia’s tea lasted very well, eked out with graham crackers.

CHAPTER IV

MISS TITWILER didn’t care if he was the Great Professor, she liked Mr. Bennett better! So she said to herself defiantly after the celebrated Hutchinson had bellowed, denounced, coaxed, satirized and caressed his way into the

hearts of Sociology 42A in his first lecture. He was red-headed, he was dramatic, just as Euphemia had said. He did tear down and build up empires with a wand of lightning. He did make the class shout with laughter and snifle with sympathy. He did take everybody’s breath. . . . “Rome was simply a precocious child, a prodigy nation that stopped showing off . . .”

But Miss Titwiler, remembering a timid, smallish lecturer named Bennett, was not to be taken in by such heroics. It was the first time Mr. Elwood Bennett, most modest of aides, had ever been esteemed above his chief. It was probably the last time he would ever be so esteemed. Pity that he did not know of his passing renown.

Yet it was not to be denied that Mr. Bennett had his own standing in the university. For example, he was asked now and then to speak before gatherings.

“Hey,” called Euphemia one morning as Miss Titwiler hurried past, her eyes glued to a class room door beyond, “wait a minute.”

She proffered an invitation, panting.

“Club’s going to have a pow-wow tonight. Come along. Your hero, little Bennett’s, going to be there. Bring somebody, if you like. Fact is, we need a few more dues right now and are welcoming guests fervently. Got to go to a seminar. Bye.”

A pow-wow! Whatever it was, it sounded delightful. Miss Titwiler found herself in a great flutter of excitement, the cause of which she would not allow herself to admit. She invited Miss Freeman, in the next room, to accompany her. Miss Freeman had another engagement and told her to go alone, furthermore intimating that to go places alone was more than often the portion of unmarried women above thirty. Fortified by this sensible viewpoint, Miss Titwiler made her decision, and after much brushing of her clothes and polishing of her shoes, she started out. Euphemia had set no time, and Miss Titwiler of Hagerstown, Indiana, could never have guessed that eight

o'clock was half an hour too early.

When she entered the large, bare club room, her heart stopped at what she saw. For he, Mr. Bennett, was there, alone, sitting in a small miserable heap in the depths of the marshmallow sofa. Miss Titwiler stopped, and then, not knowing in the least what to do next, went on. She kept going until she almost reached the sofa, and then, stopping again, she heard her own voice in a hollow, futile laugh.

"How silly," said her good sense deep inside her somewhere, but the man looked up gratefully.

"Er—how do you do?"

He rose and from his narrow shoulders came out a short arm. Somehow her own long arm responded. His hand was in hers, a small, chapped morsel. They looked into each other's eyes and laughed. She felt a thousand years lift from her body, and at the sensation, laughed again.

"We're early, it seems," she said gaily.

"Horribly," and at his lugubriousness they both laughed again.

Mr. Bennett did not invite her to, but Miss Titwiler sat down on the marshmallow sofa, a rushing warmth suffusing her. They talked. Wasn't it a strange October? So cold. She had tea on this very sofa yesterday. Oh, yes, he knew Miss Waters. Very able woman. He didn't like sugar in his tea, either! She had been reading Pompelli's Memoirs. Wasn't it fascinating? She was from Indiana. Oh, he had been through Indiana. Hagerstown? No, he went by the way of Fort Wayne. He went to college at Haverford. She knew a man who went there once. No, class of 1905.

But it was not trivial talk to them. Every word was a milestone in a new land, a land of timid advance, trembling confidences, joyous small revelations, where first they discovered each other, and then went on hand in hand in an exploration of delight.

Miss Titwiler's most flattering image of Mr. Bennett was a poor thing compared to the man of flesh and blood

that sat there on the sofa, an insignificant, studious, smallish gentleman with the tenderest, shyest heart in the world, and a new radiance to his sniffing little smile. Mr. Bennett, for the first time in his life, beheld and conversed with a woman who did not make him feel like an idiot that gibbered and blithered, and in the presence he expanded like a miniature sunflower.

He didn't like sugar, either! She knew his class in college! This was the sign of affinity, this was intimacy itself, to one who had never journeyed beyond blackboards into this sweet green land before. She liked his beloved Pompelli! She sat here yesterday! What more could Mr. Bennett have asked of any woman?

Thus it was that when Miss Euphemia Waters appeared, blowing and jubilant, at the door, they knew nothing of her interruption until she spoke—

"Hello!"

They looked up, dazed, as she came toward them.

"My word, if Miss Titwiler hasn't already copped the lion of the evening. Did you know you were the lion, Mr. Bennett? Well, you are, so roar all you can."

Mr. Bennett's nostrils went up in dutiful appreciation of this jest, while Miss Titwiler looked proudly upon him, the lion. Euphemia threw off a cape, revealing her fleshy self, gorgeous in antique black velvet, and was off; busy with chairs and sherbet cups.

The women students, with a few captured males in tow, began to fill the room. Euphemia and her lieutenants dashed erratically about, reducing order to chaos. When the room was nearly full, Euphemia looked at her watch, leaped at Mr. Bennett and yanked him up on the platform. He sat down on the edge of a camp chair, it teetered a bit and he pushed himself hastily back into it. Euphemia Waters pounded for order with dreadful violence, and was rewarded by a dead hush. The pow-wow was on.

But it was all a giddy nothingness to Miss Titwiler. She heard nothing. She

saw nothing, save one small gentleman on the platform, his tidy blue suit, his gleaming key, his sniffing smile. They had talked together like old friends! They were friends! This was the rhythm that ran in her blood, the thought that went over her body like hot, reckless music. And so her rapt eyes dwelt on Mr. Bennett, while her deaf ears heard not one of his words of wisdom.

Somehow the evening hours were used up, but Miss Marianna Titwiler could never have given a clear account of them. She knew one thing only: that Mr. Bennett was still in the same room with her, that he looked for her across the blur of faces, and that when he found her, his eyes took on a fine look of happy satisfaction. She knew not how many cups of sherbet she consumed, or indeed, that she consumed any. She knew not what she said or to whom she talked. Her dizzy mind recorded its one shining impression and then stopped functioning.

When she went home, it was with a new lightness, with a giddy sense of not walking at all, as if she were a balloon rolling along without legs.

She had never been so happy. She wished she could fly to the stars and romp with them.

CHAPTER V

It soon became apparent that Mr. Bennett was "interested in" Miss Titwiler, and the apartment, as well as Euphemia Waters, became enormously watchful, curious, sympathetic. The telephone had a new significance: it might be for Miss Titwiler, and to see her rose-checked pleasure at the message was worth a dozen ordinary calls. Miss Titwiler no longer sat in her room, listening to the lives of other people passing her door. She went out by the side of Mr. Bennett and lived full, rich hours of her own. She got a new hat. And she was suspected of neglecting her studies to cavort with a man.

There was one named Freeman who uttered pronouncements on fools, espe-

cially old ones, but there were those who watched with more charitable eyes. One of these, surprisingly enough, was Euphemia Waters.

"My word," said she, "another cactus blooms."

Euphemia had seen seminar romances before. Hence her rather irreverent aphorism. Then she would expand. "There, my friends, is the history of the race reduced to its simplest terms. Sociology flies out of the window when love comes in at the door. But who would have suspected little Bennett of deserting the mass for the individual? Basely unprofessional! Well, that's a game that college can't beat. Don't know as I'd want it to. Miss Titwiler is a nice thing. No wonder Bennett likes her. Little care they that she is a head taller. Lord, how foolish and happy they look."

But although her companions knew of every tryst that Miss Titwiler kept with the pursuing Mr. Bennett, yet, after all, they knew less than nothing about the high quality of these trysts, how it was a thrilling joy just to sit on the same bench together (fully fifty benches became hallowed by these sittings, and they were scattered over the length and breadth of the city); how everything that was said was unforgettable, though nothing much was said at all; how it seemed that every moment together was the best one and then next time, how much sweeter and better the moments were found to be than those that had gone before.

It was discovered that Miss Titwiler had committed the anachronism of never having gone to the opera, and Mr. Bennett handsomely purchased seats in the top gallery. The apartment was agog over this gallantry and saw them off with a fine showing of good will. But how could these women ever know what a night it was for the two in love? They pored over Miss Freeman's libretto, but Miss Freeman, when she used it next, did not see the aura of romance that bathed it. She only grumbled that Mr. Bennett had mussed it up a lot. And he had, for it was that

night that Mr. Bennett's small, blue, chapped hand pressed Miss Titwiler's slender one for the briefest moment of time, and then, while her heart stopped for a tick or two, he clutched the booklet with embarrassed hands and pawed it frantically. How could that apartment full of women, studying and sleeping the magic night through, dream that as Mr. Bennett and Miss Titwiler were carried off on waves of sound, they ceased to be middle-aged, obscure, starved, and became flaming figures of light and beauty, with music their pulse and harps and violins and voices the very breath in their lungs?

Her landlady, with a meaning phrase, offered Miss Titwiler her own rooms as a suitable calling place for a man of Mr. Bennett's intentions, and made a great to-do in her efforts to keep out of the way and yet hear what was going on at the same time. But even she, susceptible to romance, would have been amazed at the thoughts that ran riot in the heads of those two as they sat there. Mr. Bennett did not look like a man whose fancy would play fast and loose with him, yet there he sat, bolt upright, politely conversational, pretending every moment in a furtive but busy corner of his brain, that this was their living room, hers and his; while she, serene, chatty, and just as deceptive, sat there and pretended the same shameless thing.

There were a dozen other memorable occasions, chiefly inexpensive, all of them overwhelming successes—a trip to the Metropolitan Museum, a walk on the Palisades, tea in Chinatown, and a luncheon at the sacred Faculty Club, which Mr. Bennett explained none too delicately he did not visit often on account of the cost.

It did not strike Miss Titwiler as odd that a bachelor on an assistant's salary should be penny-counting. So used was she to the sound of poverty that Mr. Bennett, rich, would have frightened her away, when with Mr. Bennett, poor, she felt at home.

And yet Miss Titwiler, for all her thrift, was an extravagant woman, and

a greedy one, when it came to Mr. Bennett. She gave more and more to him every day, lavishly, abundantly; and she wanted more than she got, more of Mr. Bennett, more of love, more of certainty. Her desire raced breathlessly ahead, and now, in December, Miss Titwiler was trying to possess her soul in patience until the day when he should propose marriage to her.

"He'll do it the night before I go away," she thought, "and then perhaps I shan't go at all."

She pictured to herself that proposal scene over and over again—Mr. Bennett's stuttering timidity made brave with love, her own whole-hearted readiness. She would put her arms around his neck. How sweet, how sweet, it would be. She could hardly wait. She was to go back to her school at Hagerstown in February, but she knew that she would recklessly throw up the whole thing if only he wanted her to.

She was becoming absent-minded. The fat, shambling Chinese who sat next to her, sniggering and tittering at the sallies of the Great Professor, got no answering gleam from her as he had in earlier days, and found only a far-away stare where the keen look used to be. The sweet, ridiculous little woman in the white stocking cap still nodded brightly at her, and Miss Titwiler nodded back with tardy willingness, but her heart was not in her smile, being instead in a seminar room above, in the vest pocket of a small assistant there. The girl with the dark teeth still flounced and preened, but Miss Titwiler never saw her—until Miss Freeman stopped in her room one night.

"Saw Mr. Bennett at the drug store," she remarked carelessly, or so it seemed to Miss Titwiler, she could scarcely keep from leaping at her as she answered "Yes?"

"Um," went on Miss Freeman. "He was with a girl."

Miss Titwiler's head spun, but she said nothing.

"You know her, I guess. Lucy Bell Simpson, from New Orleans?"

Miss Titwiler shook her head.

"Yes, you do, she's in sociology. Girl with big wings of hair over her ears—"

"Bold girl, who shows off all the time?" Miss Titwiler's sudden dart of intuition left her no time to select soft adjectives.

"You might call her bold," allowed Miss Freeman grudgingly. "The men like her, all right. Just flock around her."

"Southern." Miss Titwiler's explanation carried something of prejudice in it.

"Well, she certainly was making Mr. Bennett dance a jig. They had chocolate sodas. She had two! Imagine!"

She finally went. Miss Titwiler, jealous to the core, tried to rout the horrid suspicion Miss Freeman had left behind. But she had a gnawing discomfort until Mr. Bennett, at their next meeting, happened to mention it.

"There's a Miss Simpson in your class, friend of young Berry. He's freshman math instructor, you know. I had to go call on her. He had a cold. Do you know her?"

Miss Titwiler's relief was like a fresh wind blowing through her and the trivial episode was swept out of her mind. And all was the same as before, until one evening in December when Miss Titwiler was sure her hour had come.

"I'm going home for Christmas," said Mr. Bennett.

Miss Titwiler's heart shot to her boots, but she answered with encouraging friendliness.

"And I wondered—if—you—would like to come—and spend the day there with us—my mother and father."

With a secret, joyful recognition of the significance of a visit to Mr. Bennett's parents, Miss Titwiler accepted. They discussed plans. They would go up Christmas Eve and come back Christmas night. He had work to do at the university and could spare no more time. He lived at Waterbury, Connecticut. His mother and father were old.

They were sitting in Morningside

Park, in unbelievably bland December weather, and when the last word had been said about trains and tickets, there fell a silence upon them. . . .

It was coming, Miss Titwiler knew. Wildfire charged in her breast.

Mr. Bennett shifted a bit on the bench.

Across the park burned the lamps of a hundred homes, challenging him to go on and light his own lamp, found his own home with that woman by his side. The poplar trees, aspiring and bare, yearned to the silver chip in the sky above with as much longing as if it had been a full moon. The elevated train, like a jewelled lizard in midair, emerged from darkness, twisting and curving, now here, now out of sight, a fairy monster made of glitter and emeralds and rubies. It disappeared and all was soft light and thick quiet as it had been before.

Mr. Bennett shifted again. He cleared his throat. Miss Titwiler thought her heart would choke her.

"Getting a bit chilly. Perhaps we'd better go in," he said, rising.

CHAPTER VI

THE trip to Mr. Bennett's home ended at a small, old white house, where two frail, aged people waited with bated breath for their coming. At their welcome of Mr. Bennett, Miss Titwiler felt an intruder, their trembling hands and tearful eyes so frankly gave them away. But the old lady soon rose to her hostess-ship, and Miss Titwiler was shown to the best chamber, a large, cold, rather bare room, touched up with embroidered pillow cases, a white toilet set and an oil heater. It looked like her own mother's best chamber of years ago.

The old lady had toiled up the stairs with her.

"The bathroom's downstairs," she said. "Elwood had it put in," her pride rose to her face, "next to our bedroom."

Miss Titwiler thanked her warmly, but absently, as she wondered when she

would call him Elwood, and rejoiced further in him that he was a son who put bathrooms downstairs, next to his mother's bedroom.

At supper, Miss Titwiler was prostrated with adoration of one whom she thought she had already admired to the last degree. He was so tender with his mother, ordering her about as if she were a spoiled child, bringing in the supper with his own hands. He was so kindly to his father, that ancient, feeble man who could scarcely leave his chair, whose voice was now a whisper, now a gritty bass.

He told them all the news of the university. They forgot names he had told them a dozen times before, but he recalled them patiently. He teased them about their Christmas gifts: did his mother want a pair of high-heeled slippers? They told them together about the opera, and the old lady's eyes glistened with pleasure. She, if you please, had heard Patti sing. Then the old man went sound asleep in his chair, and the old lady began to droop a bit.

They *were* old, thought Miss Titwiler as she crept into her big bed that night. He spilled things. She forgot things. There was a woman in the kitchen who took care of them. They seemed very poor. It must have taken all they had to pay her wages.

How Mr. Bennett shone in her eyes as a dutiful son. His room was next to hers, and she heard him moving about. She closed her eyes, but she could not close her mind. When they were married, perhaps the poor, lonely old people could live with them. She would love to help care for them. The proposal would come soon now. This was the last stepping-stone.

But Christmas, a simple, happy day, passed, the vacation passed, final examinations approached, and still Mr. Bennett had not asked her to marry him. Miss Titwiler wondered, but her faith never wavered. He was calling a little less regularly, but he was busy. Once he was seen with Lucy Bell. That hurt, but had she not visited his family? That was the signal to her and to

the world that she was chosen, and Miss Titwiler clung to it desperately. She only waited for the night before she should go away. Study was out of the question. These were the last days of her great opportunity, but she could become only mildly interested.

"I'm a lovesick calf," she told herself in a moment of insight. "But I can't help it," she added miserably.

Mr. Bennett escorted her to a lecture, and as was his elegant wont, saw to it that ice-cream sodas were forthcoming afterward. At the soda fountain were groups of boys and girls, all paired off neatly, some of the girls with diamond rings. Miss Titwiler, waiting for her ring, watched the sparkle of those diamonds and was bitten deep with envy.

Mr. Bennett asked her to take a bus ride. The top of the bus, whereon they sat, was crowded with lovers, frankly affectionate in full view of the world, and Miss Titwiler grew almost angry at the discreet man by her side. Why didn't he forget himself once, she thought savagely, and hug her good and hard? At this, she burned with self-reproach. Clearly, she was rather a vile woman. Mr. Bennett went on talking about Central Park.

"I shall miss you," he said one night.

She was silent.

"When do you go?"

"Next Thursday."

"May I call Wednesday evening?"

His usual formula, but triumph shouted within her.

"I shall be very glad to see you."

He came, bearing half a pound of chocolates, but he seemed rather sad, and Miss Titwiler had a painful stab of premonition. They got through the evening. He said good-bye. Would she write to him? She saw divinity in his eyes as he raised them to hers, but his lips spoke ordinary syllables. He wished he could take her to the train, but he had an examination. He turned his back and walked out of her sight.

Miss Titwiler, in agony, closed the door.

CHAPTER VII

SHE got up at six o'clock after a rack-ing night, a night of patchwork sleep and waking, of deranged dreams, of hideous starts, of long, tormented wakefulness. What did it mean? Had he been playing with her? No, no, she couldn't think that of Mr. Bennett's eyes, his unflagging devotion, his sad little back as he had turned away that night. Was it Lucy Bell? Ridiculous! . . . Yet the hopeless truth still hung before her eyes like a black curtain through which there was no light: he had said good-bye, he had let her go, tomorrow she would leave and never . . .

Miss Titwiler fought hard but she gained not an inch of ground, and now somehow her numb limbs needed action. With aching breast, she left the house.

On Morningside Drive, the sun strode like a golden peacock, spreading a tail of sun rays over all the sleepy house-tops to set them agog with light. A milk-wagon horse stood at the curb regarding the scene with ironic eye. A small dog trotted patiently from one dirty snow patch to another in search of breakfast. A worn-looking woman walked down the street and disappeared.

After breakfast, which she did not eat, her hands somehow went through the last packing rites. She collected her things from the bathroom and said good-bye to the women in the apartment. They were affectionate and begged her to write. She said she would, of course. And they must visit Hagerstown, sometime.

At ten o'clock she was on the train for Hagerstown, the ache in her heart almost crushing her, her serene face hurt and white under the hat that had been bought for him.

CHAPTER VIII

THE principal was asking about her elementary sociology course.

"Wait till next Fall," she said curtly. She would forget sociology for a while.

The students, her landlady, the Sun-

day-school superintendent, the other teachers, all were glad to see her. But Miss Titwiler hated them, as she hated everything that reminded her of the thousand miles and the ages of time between her and a dead dream. And this busy, friendly town, because it was not the scene of that dream, was a vacuum. She longed for Hairpin Alley, her garden of agony. She felt that if she could lay her head down on its dirty cobblestones and sob, comfort would come as from a mother's breast. That was home. And this—was mere space with people in it.

She went about her business with a sick heart. People said she looked thin, not a compliment to one of her spare frame, but she did not care. They went farther to conclude that she had been working hard and chided her anxiously. She heard them with guilt. Little did they imagine that her hard work had consisted of walks and talks and ice-cream sodas with a man, that she was thin from sleepless hours of thinking about a man, brooding over the words of a man.

Mr. Alex Fleming met her in front of the drug store.

"Well, bless my soul!" was his greeting. "Mighty glad to see you, Marianna. How is the highbrow, anyway? That's right, get mad! Well, did you learn anything in New York, besides the ologies? Bet you did! Learned how to buy a lid, I'll say! Say, is that Broadway, Marianna?"

Miss Titwiler, who liked the old bore, somehow could not be gay and pleased to save her, and Alex reported to his wife that noon that Marianna was sorta peaked and tired-out lookin', musta worked too hard.

The Sunday-school superintendent assumed that she would take her old class again.

"No, I guess I won't," she told him.

The amazed man inferred thereat that she turned heathen, then decided she was tired out, musta worked too hard.

Finally people stopped talking about her return. She was again in her fixed

place in a world that never changed. But the ache in her breast grew harder to bear, and she wondered if the morning would ever come when she could be glad to wake up and face herself.

A letter came from Euphemia scribbled in class, full of cheerful, slangy gossip. Miss Titwiler raced through it for news of Mr. Bennett, but there was nothing. Euphemia must have guessed. The letter made her tremble to do the dread thing she knew she ought not to do: write a letter to Mr. Bennett.

"I promised him I would," her desire prompted her.

"But it'll only make things worse for you," said her conscience.

"Of course, I'll write," she decided, going to the desk. "It's only sensible. And I did promise."

But after a month, when she had written twice and he had answered, by return mail, she knew it had been a mistake. For his letters, because of their persistent note of restraint, only whipped up the storm to a greater fury in Miss Titwiler's breast.

"He jilted me once," she told herself unhappily, "and he's still jilting me. I could get these letters until I died, and nothing would come of it."

And Miss Titwiler's anguish was that she wanted something to come of it, so passionately.

In spite of herself, she began to think of Lucy Bell Simpson, Lucy Bell who stopped at nothing to subject the least of men, who pursued with diligent good humor, and who somehow, by the exercise of her horrid art, managed to succeed with the pursued as often as she failed. Miss Titwiler had the flimsiest evidence, yet to her rampant imagination, it was conclusive, and her most agonizing apparition was that of Mr. Bennett and Lucy Bell walking together in paths where once she had walked with him gladly and proudly.

Her days crawled unwillingly along, heavy-footed, painful. She felt herself becoming irritable and did not care, rather reveling in unaccustomed petulance as a luxury. Somehow it was a relief to be savage to poor Alex Flem-

ing, who was utterly at a loss with such a woman, and it did her good, in a strange, perverted way, to snap at the teachers in her school, who, it is true, snapped back.

Teaching, to which she had always taken a full measure of joyful interest, bored her. The children, who once had been mysterious and romantic beings to her, in their potential capacity for everything in the world, seemed ordinary and stupid.

The society of Hagerstown awoke only her hostility. Who wanted to go to church suppers and stuff in honor of the unconverted? Miss Titwiler preferred to sit at home and feast on the bitterness of a certain dead dream. Her sewing club met, as it had done, for fourteen years, to sew on lacy silks.

"What," inquired Miss Titwiler of herself for the first time in those fourteen years, "do I want of a white satin camisole?" and stayed at home.

Her landlady, a croaking widow, smelled a secret, but when a woman does nothing more than say good morning to you, how can you run down the scent? The boarders at Miss Titwiler's table thought her abstracted, faintly tart. . . . These were her days and her nights were nights of heart-break, of struggle, of new resolutions, of prodding memories, of unreasoning, persistent hope, of final despair, exhaustion, sleep . . . and waking, only to begin the whole torturous cycle again. Lucy Bell preened through these night hours with Mr. Bennett always at her side.

CHAPTER IX

THEN one day a letter came with a postscript that set a mad notion brewing in Miss Titwiler's brain.

The letter was from Mr. Bennett, the postscript a triumph of decorum and constraint. It said, "I miss you very much," but when Miss Titwiler read it, the first of its kind, she saw Mr. Bennett's wistful eyes on the night of their good-by. She read it again and again, and it grew from a common phrase of

courtesy to the cry of a lover, shrank back to its first proportions, then swelled again into a very lament of hunger, love and loneliness.

The mad notion brewed harder and faster all night.

When Miss Titwiler arose the next morning, a new strength was in her limbs. The day was a soft one in late April. A shower tinkled against the window with a sound like bells, and outside in the landlady's garden the young green leaves staggered under their freight of silver wine, frowsy and rakish, drunken little dandies after an orgy with Spring. Later, as Miss Titwiler looked out of her window, a warm sun had sent the rain scuttling, and the mild air had taken on an edge of wind.

On the 4:50 train for New York, excitement still sent the blood running like sap through her veins. What was she doing here? She didn't care! She had to do something! One couldn't go through life just one embodied ache, as she had been doing for weeks. Those past weeks, as she turned back to them, made her shudder.

She smiled, wanly, at the consternation into which she had thrown the entire population of Hagerstown. The principal had all but swooned at her announcement that urgent business called her to New York. Alex, who had seen to tickets for her, had performed his offices in a state of complete insensibility. The bank teller, when she drew out her entire account, conducted himself carefully, as a man hoping to avert internal explosion. And the women of the town were still clacking over an event that was all mystery and no logic to them.

The train raced along, but it could not go fast enough for one impatient traveler who turned from side to side in an upper berth. She tried to read, but could not, and sleep was impossible for eyelids that seemed sealed to her brows. There was nothing to do but lie there and wait the interminable hours until morning. A terrific jarring and scraping, backing and bumping, told her she was in Pittsburgh, half-

way along her journey. Finally she slept and awoke with a headache that assailed her temples like mallets.

In the dressing-room, she saw herself in the mirror and became bitter at the idea of her romantic quest. She was old and thin. Her clothes were mussed. . . . But the postscript had been written to her, not to any other, lovelier, younger—not to Lucy Bell!

She leaped at the cold water and began a vigorous rubbing and brushing. The mallets in her head knocked with less violence, and when she had had coffee, ceased altogether. But she was still tired and dull, with a surge of agitation under her fatigue that felt like a tide against a wooden wall.

Philadelphia at last! Only two more hours.

Trenton! She tapped the window sill with all her energy, urging the train on.

Telegraph poles again, marshes, a village, then with a swoop they were under the river. The porter was dusting off suitcases in a frenzy of industry. The train slowed up. Everybody began to bustle.

She was here!

Through a crowd that seemed a host of angels because it was in New York, she worked her way, quivering with emotion. A street car took her to a hotel for women that she knew of. She took the cheapest room available and when she entered it, went straight to the telephone on the wall.

As she called the university number, her hand shook with a violence that frightened her, accustomed as she was to the fierceness of her own passion. At the sight of it, a rush of self-pity, of weakness, came over her, and she wanted to cry. But the operator had answered and she had to speak.

"Mr. Bennett, please."

In a flash, his voice was in her ears, but not before she had become an icicle of fear and dread.

"Mr. Bennett?" she asked, stupidly, though how well she knew it was.

"Yes." How could he know it was

she, whom he thought a thousand miles away?

"This is—Miss Titwiler!"

Oh, if only she had not come; if she had not done this idiotic thing!

"Miss Titwiler!"

She heard his short gasp of surprise, then, in his politest tones, "Oh, yes, how do you do? I didn't know—Where are you?"

She told him, sick at his propriety.

He inquired for her health and was concerned as to whether she had had a pleasant journey.

She answered, insensibly.

He said something more.

"What is it?" she asked.

"Very well. Good-by," said Mr. Bennett, courteously as before.

She heard him jab the receiver into the hook. Unbelieving, terrified, she waited a moment for a sound that did not come. Then the monstrous truth swept upon her, and she fell on the bed, the old ache in her breast now a wild torment. Anger rose in her, too. She was angry at him for a cold, unfeeling, selfish wretch of a man; angry at herself for being a fool. He *had* courted her—no, he had played with her, walking with Lucy Bell all the time. He was a mere philanderer, and she, a simpleton, had read sincerity into his sport. What a fool she had been, fool, fool, fool! Why had she ever met him? Why had he not—No, never think of *that* again! Why couldn't she have let the corpse stay buried decently, instead of digging it up as she had? Her morbid mind hugged the metaphor. It *was* a corpse. Could she let it go? Why had she come? What a fool she was! Her mind turned like a wheel in her head, over the same path of quivering nerves, that sobbing did nothing to relieve.

Agony of this had passed when a knock at the door startled her, and the grinning face of a bell-girl in pigtales was thrust in at the door.

"Yuh left yer receiver off the hook," she informed Miss Titwiler. "Operator says put it on—please." Manners

were evidently of painful acquisition to pigtales.

"Oh—yes," replied Miss Titwiler, trying to cover up her red eyes.

The girl disappeared, then was back, her head stuck in at the door again.

"There's a man downstairs to see yuh," she added casually. "Mr. Benson."

"What?" shrieked Miss Titwiler.

"Mr. Benson to see yuh," repeated the girl. "We been tryin' to getchuh on the phone. He's sittin' by the elevator."

Miss Titwiler, at the bureau, was dabbing at her nose wildly with a chamois. She was pulling her hair down and putting it up. She was scattering hairpins and collecting them again. She was scratching furiously in her satchel and finding nothing. Pigtales surveyed her for a moment, and made a deduction.

"I'll tell him you'll be right down," she offered, and was gone.

It was some moments later that Miss Titwiler followed. Grim calm had settled upon her. Was she always thus to be on the edge of hope, only to be repulsed? For, of course, this would be only one more meeting such as their last. Mr. Bennett would run the gamut of polite inquiries, would talk school and weather and Hairpin Alley, and then depart, his bachelorhood still safe from her intrusion. So Miss Titwiler schooled herself to think. Yet when the elevator did not come immediately, she chose to run downstairs pell-mell, grim calm being thrown to the winds.

Her first sight of Mr. Bennett was that of his eyes fastened on the elevator in a dogged gaze that hardly allowed him to blink. Then she saw the rest of him, sitting huddled on the edge of the chair, as unprepossessing, as humble, as ever, but alas, as dear to her sight as always he had been.

When he saw her, as she turned to him from the stairway, his face became transfigured. At that moment Miss Titwiler bade Lucy Bell farewell with a loud ha-ha in her soul. Their hand-

clasp was a rush and a clinging together, and Miss Titwiler, to save her immortal soul, could not control the sob that came to her throat.

He turned awkwardly around, still holding her hands in his, and his eyes roved.

"Where—" he began. "Is there a place—of any kind?"

Miss Titwiler nodded, and pulling her hands away, led him down a corridor. Bell-girls and old ladies in black shawls lining the way, stared idly at a small gentleman with a great gold key on his stomach trotting obediently after a woman who seemed to be in a trance. They disappeared into a small parlor, the bell-girls and old ladies forgot them, and never knew that the little parlor was making history that very moment.

Miss Titwiler stopped when she got to a table and looked uncertainly around her. Her glance steadied when she saw his smile, his smile that spelled something as of old, but now with a new and heavenly radiance.

But as he looked at her he became sober, awed, and he asked her a question, softly.

"Why did you? Tell me, if you can."

"I can't," she answered shakily.

"I've done all I can. I can't—"

He stepped closer and took her hands in his small ones, and again she saw divinity in his eyes, as she had seen

it before. But this time his lips spoke the words they had once refused.

"Of course," he said soothingly; "of course. You've done more than your share." He stopped a moment. "I thought—I thought you wouldn't want me after I took you to my home, and showed you my cares—my responsibilities there—"

She cried out, thinking of her own interpretation of that visit, her fond plans for his parents.

"I was a coward," he continued. "But I am a coward, my dear. That's the kind of man you're—getting. And we'll be so poor— But you do want me. Thank God you do. I know it now."

"I didn't know you were coming down here," Miss Titwiler said weakly, irrelevantly. "I thought—"

"You didn't understand me on the telephone?" His eyes, brooding on her, saw the suffering that still threw its shadow on her face.

"Oh!" As he spoke she saw his understanding and joy—joy that she could suffer for him. "Oh! And I have wanted you so much!"

He crushed her hands painfully to him, and closed his eyes.

"It's so good to have you again," he told her.

She wondered, in his arms, if he would ever know just how good it was.

(THE END)



THERE are two great mistakes one can make—telling a woman you love her too early in life, or too early in the evening.



The Fur Coat

By Gilbert Cannan

DISCUSSION turned on tragedy and Tyson, the American, whose contribution hitherto had been the wide (but not very deep) humanity of his people, expressed the opinion that tragedy nowadays was avoided because it was ridiculous.

"Look," he said, "at Will Shakespeare and the Greeks, killing everybody off to avoid facing it. If Hamlet and Orestes didn't die, they'd have to say: 'I guess we're a couple of damn fools.' No sir, there's no tragedy for a man who has a hundred dollars in the bank."

An English woman, who said little but kept the ball rolling with pointed observations at the right moment, threw in: "But there were no banks in those days."

"Kings," said the American, "could owe money without limit. If you want tragedy you have to go to the bank-clerk, the poor boob who sits in his little cage pulling in the dough and shoveling it out without a cent sticking to his fingers. Has he a hundred dollars? Not he. Nothing can happen to him because he daren't let it, and if it does then he can write his name in three letters—m-u-d, and, I ask you, is there any tragedy in mud?"

Americans do not understand conversation. They tell stories or impart information in a series of miniature lectures. In private life Americans have nothing at all to say to each other, and they make up for it in public. Tyson's audience, respecting the national characteristic, abandoned discussion and sank back in their deck-chairs either to listen or to watch the waves splashing up over the low-hanging stars.

"The silliest damn fool I ever knew," said Tyson leaning forward with his

most American expression of rapt innocence, the mask of shrewdness having fallen away, "the silliest damn fool I ever knew was a bank-clerk in a day-and-night bank, and the Muse of tragedy had marked him for her own. She must have put her icy finger on his brow when the bone was soft, for the derved fool, out of banking hours, thought of nothing but the play-writing business. There was nothing he didn't know about it except how to write a play, and thinking about it made him bald enough to be Will Shakespeare II and the Big Barnum of the Great American people in one. No highbrow stuff. He knew all there was to know about royalties, but that was too near the banking cage to interest him. No. He wanted to be the man who comes out on the stage after the second act like a skinned weasel and who looks more ashamed of himself than if he had been caught talking to himself in his shaving glass.

"He looked the part, and that was almost too much for him. You could tell by his expression that he was waiting for something, and that was it: he was waiting for the moment when he would be shoved out onto the stage for his audience to have a look at the criminal who had done the thing, and it frightened him so that he forgot all about writing plays, and every cent he had went in dressing up for the part. He had the face all right and the bald head, but do what he could, he could never dress expensively enough to give him confidence.

"He lived in a boarding house, and a man who has a soul can be a king in a boarding house, which is one of the places where women go to look for

souls. Have you seen them, these women who are disappointed with the earth and want someone like Mary Baker G. Eddy to tell them that it isn't?"

"Isn't what?" some one interjected lazily.

"Ain't," said the American laconically. "Augustus was so wrapped up in his forehead and the right kind of tie that he wasn't looking out for widows."

"He hadn't read his *Pickwick* then?"

"Read? Nothing. He was an American. He wasn't looking out for widows, but widows are always looking out for someone, and if one man gets away there is always some poor gink to fall into his place. Augustus fell."

Tyson began to warm to his story and his dramatic manner drew the attention even of the star-gazers.

"He fell and Hamlet and Orestes were pep to the hounds of conscience compared with him, for if there is one thing necessary to the play-writing business it is virtue. The line that parsons draw is human compared with that drawn in plays and Augustus suffered hell when the widow started giving him things—books at first and then cigars and then, as she began to understand him, clothes, collars, ties, the outfit necessary for the idea he had of himself and the time when David Belasco would throw down his pen and say: 'I can not hold a candle to this sun.'"

"The widow had to move by guess-work, for he was closer than the bank in which he maneuvered dollars, but wooing woman guesses near the mark. She knew nothing about the play-business, but she guessed he had a message and she wanted to get it out of him to make him comfortable and easy for the rest of what she wanted, and she found that the more she dolled him up the more soulful he looked, for the nearer seemed the awful moment when he would be pushed into the limelight.

"I don't know if you ladies and gentlemen would call this love, but in any part of this world I have never seen anything but this game of noughts and crosses and what the books say must

be all wrong. Don't you see how silly it is, and how the only thing to do is to go down to your bank and ask how many dollars there are against your name. That's something to cling on to; but the poor tragic simp had nothing but his idea of virtue, which ain't—is not—in currency, except in plays. No man worth the name of a man would accept a present from a woman and he was doing it because his widow had found his weak spot and was playing on it without knowing how weak it was, which of course, is where all women come to grief.

"You see his situation? Was Hamlet's any worse? I think not. He had his part to play, and like the rest of us, he would play it until he dropped, and she was dressing him for it. Well, that season in New York the most successful play was written by an Englishman, and presently that Englishman came over—you know the way they do—all nervous smiles, thinking of the dollars and the newspapers and the bang in the eye it all is for the old folks at home—dressed up for the great American public in a cigar and a fur coat. And the fur coat hit Augustus in the wind. It was the only thing lacking. He felt that if only he had a fur coat he would even write that play, get that masterpiece down on paper.

"The idea made him look so soulful that the widow bought him two meerschau pipes and a blue Russian leather engagement book and she even went to a lecture agency to see if they wouldn't book a new American prophet, for she felt sure that his message was overdue, and she had been more than nine months at it. . . . Nothing doing in American prophets. Morgans were running the British Empire just then and the agencies had more Englishmen than there are cities in the States.

"That was a terrible winter. The cold came late but it came hard. The widow wanted to buy something for Augustus to console him and to make the message come easier, and something made her stop outside Brooks Brothers store with the words fur coat stamped

on her brain. She looked up and there, sure enough, in the window was a fur coat. The game of noughts and crosses, which in books they lie about, results in a kind of aggravated telepathy which is worse than having the telephone ringing all day long. The receiver in the widow said fur coat, there *was* a fur coat, and she went in and bought it and sent it to Augustus without a word.

"He spent the night in it. He could not take it off. He laid out paper, pen and ink and cast his scruples to the four winds. What is virtue to an ambitious man? Did not Shakespeare desert Anne Hathaway and Napoleon Josephine? All the same he felt a skunk because the widow was so blamed ugly.

"In the morning he hesitated. It was very cold but he had had a hectic night.

Could he, should he, wear the fur coat to the bank? By Jove, he would. In a few weeks—when Belasco had thrown down his pen—the bank, the cage, the rolls of notes, the young men with dud checks would know him no more. He wore the fur coat.

"The next day the manager of the bank sent for him and thinking of the greatness that awaited him, he went in defiantly to that dread hole that the richest men have entered nervously. The manager told him that the bank was opening a branch at Colon on the Panama Canal and desired him to take charge of it.

"There, ladies and gentlemen, is tragedy and I defy Shakespeare or Euripides or any bald-browed scribbler to make it anything but ridiculous."



Incoherence

By Bernice Lesbia Kenyon

WE that are swift with words
 Keep silence, now . . .
 Teach me the speech of birds,
 Or tell me how
 Leaves talk in unstirred light,
 Or streams make murmuring,
 Or at what grayest height
 The slow rain learns to sing.

These have one simple way
 Of saying all . . .
 Why on our sudden day
 Must silence fall?
 Quiet—quiet you stand
 And give no sound nor sign
 But this—your outstretched hand
 Is trembling more than mine!



Colleges

By K. A. Robinson

COLLEGES! Colleges where the faculty are not allowed to smoke. Colleges that use a Bowdlerized Shakespeare. Colleges that regard the evolution theory as the subtlest bait the Devil has yet thrown out. Colleges that try professors for heresy for teaching the "Ode on Intimations of Immortality." Colleges of the Baptist rite that forbid Sunday newspapers on the campus and observe "silent hour" on Sunday afternoons. Colleges that pay part of their professors' salaries in farm produce. Colleges in Arkansas and South Dakota that publish journals of scholarly research. Colleges of nickel-plating and piano-tuning. Colleges whose presidents are pious money-grabbers with long whiskers, dancing sarabands around patent-medicine millionaires. Colleges where professors may not marry daughters of other professors for fear of promoting anarchistic alliances within the faculty. Colleges where professors *do* marry daughters of other professors and have offspring who become professors too. Colleges that hire these offspring. Col-

leges of new thought, mental healing, and saxophone playing. Colleges in Georgia and Mississippi that are not averse to turning their grounds over for lynching bees. State universities where the legislature fires the president and faculty whenever the state changes hands politically. Blue-nosed New England institutes mumbling their gums over Matthew Arnold. Colleges with professors of literature who cannot tell whether a book is good or not until it has mellowed in the wood for fifty years. Colleges celebrating "Founder's Day" in honor of some hog-jowled gazabo who made his money selling shoddy raincoats to the soldiers in the Spanish War. Denominational seminaries where each instructor is required to do a little proselytizing on the side. Colleges where the professors of economics and political science are commanded to whoop like hell for vested interests and the straight ticket. Colleges that anybody can get into. Colleges that nobody can get out of. Colleges!



LOVE is the statement of war aims; marriage is the Versailles Treaty.



Répétition Générale

By George Jean Nathan and H. L. Mencken

§ 1

THE Critic as Artist.—It is my experience as a critic of letters, after two decades of active practice, that it is a practical impossibility for a critic to remain on terms of genuine friendship with the artist whose work he criticizes. They may keep up the outward show of good-will and politeness, as civilized men always do, but under the surface there is an incurable antagonism. Part of it arises out of the impossible demands of the critic. He expects the artist to live up to his good opinion, without the slightest compromise or faltering—and this is commonly beyond human power. He feels that any let-down compromises *him*—that his artist-friend is stabbing him in the back, and making him ridiculous—and this feeling rasps his vanity. Having brought forth his champion, he has staked, so to speak, all his money on him, and he neither wants to lose it nor to face the ensuing derision. The most bitter of all literary quarrels are those between critics and artists, and most of them arise in just this way. As for the artist, he on his part naturally resents the critic's air of proprietorship, and he resents it especially when he has an uneasy feeling that he has fallen short of his best work, and that the discontent of the critic is thus justified. Injustice is relatively easy to bear; what stings is justice.

But there is another clash of vanities that is even more destructive to friendship than this one. It has its origin in the fact that the critic, for all the common assumption to the contrary, is also an artist himself, and that his creative

impulse is bound, soon or late, to cause him to neglect some of the little delicacies which enter into friendship. When he sits down to compose his criticism, his artist ceases to be a friend, and becomes mere raw material for his work of art. It is my experience that artists invariably resent this cavalier use of them. They are pleased so long as the critic confines himself to the modest business of interpreting them—preferably in terms of their own estimate of themselves—but the moment he proceeds to adorn their theme with variations, the moment he brings ideas of his own to the enterprise and begins contrasting them with their ideas, that moment they grow restive. It is precisely at this point, of course, that criticism becomes genuine criticism; before that it was mere reviewing. When a critic passes it he loses his friends. By becoming an artist, he becomes the foe of all other artists.

§ 2

On Relative Eminence in the United States.—I have just put my hand into my pocket and pulled out a one dollar and a five dollar bill. On the one dollar bill I see a picture of George Washington. On the five dollar bill I see a picture of Benjamin Harrison. I put my hand back into my pocket and pull out a one cent piece and a half dollar. On the cent is a profile of Abraham Lincoln. On the half dollar is a profile of Maxine Elliott.

§ 3

On Marriage.—I often wonder why

it is that such a ridiculously small proportion of marriages are happy. Of all the married couples I know more or less intimately, only one may be said to approach, even remotely, to happiness. It is not that the other couples are tired of each other; they are not; to the contrary, they are still much taken with each other. It is not that financial matters have intruded themselves to irritate and worry; this is by no means the case; the couples are in easy circumstances. Nor is it a case of chronic illness, or of trials from children, or of mismating, or of dull routine, or of annoyances from in-laws and other relatives, or of diverse interests, or of incompatibility of one sort or another. Of this, I am certain. But unhappy they are none the less. They profess not to be, but it is clearly obvious that they are. Why? Is there something in marriage—something philosophically wrong that no one thus far has accurately plumbed? There have been hundreds of treatises on the subject, and thousands of epigrams, but it would seem that the head of the nail remains still unhit. Therefore, with my customary good nature and high sense of duty to service, I venture to come to the rescue. The great majority of married folk fail to achieve enduring happiness for the same profound reason that the great majority of bachelors and spinsters fail to achieve enduring happiness. Happiness is merely an incident in life, not life itself. To ask of marriage that it perpetuate happiness is therefore to ask of the family doctor that he cure one's cold in the head so magnificently that one will never have a cold in the head again.

§ 4

The Pursuit of Ideas.—As a professional critic of life and letters, my principal business in the world is that of manufacturing platitudes for tomorrow, which is to say, ideas so novel that they will be instantly rejected as insane and outrageous by all right-thinking men and women, and so apposite and sound that they will eventually conquer

that instinctive opposition and force themselves into the traditional wisdom of the race. I hope I need not confess that a large part of my stock in trade consists of platitudes rescued from the cobwebbed shelves of yesterday, with new labels stuck rakishly upon them. This borrowing and refurbishing of shop-worn goods, as a matter of fact, is the invariable habit of traders in ideas, at all times and everywhere. It is not, however, that all the conceivable human notions have been thought out; it is simply (to be quite honest) that the sort of men who volunteer to think out new ones seldom, if ever, have wind enough for a full day's work. The most they can ever accomplish in the way of genuine originality is an occasional brilliant spurt, and half a dozen such spurts, particularly if they come close together and show a certain coördination, are enough to make a practitioner celebrated, and even immortal.

Nature, indeed, conspires against all such genuine originality, and I have no doubt that God is against it on His heavenly throne, as His vicars and partisans unquestionably are on this earth. The dead hand pushes all of us into intellectual cages; there is in all of us a strange tendency to yield and have done. Thus the impertinent colleague of Aristotle is doubly beset, first by a public opinion that regards his enterprise as subversive and in bad taste, and secondly by an inner weakness which limits his capacity for it, and especially his capacity to throw off the prejudices and superstitions of his race, culture and time. The cell, said Haeckel, does not act, it *reacts*—and what is the instrument of reflection and speculation save a congeries of cells? At the moment of the contemporary metaphysician's loftiest flight, when he is most gratefully warmed by the feeling that he is far above all the ordinary air-planes and has an absolutely novel concept by the tail, he is suddenly pulled up by the discovery that what is entertaining him is simply the ghost of some ancient idea that his schoolmaster forced into him in 1887, or the mouldering corpse of a

doctrine that was made official in his country during the late war, or a sort of fermentation-product, to mix the figure, of a banal heresy launched upon him recently by his wife. This is the penalty that the man of intellectual curiosity and vanity pays for his violation of the divine edict that what has been revealed from Sinai shall suffice for him, and for his resistance to the natural process which seeks to reduce him to the respectable level of a patriot and taxpayer.

To an American, the business of pursuing ideas is especially difficult, for here public opinion is actively against it and the man who engages in it is commonly regarded as a public enemy. The duty of the citizen in these States is not to think daringly but to think correctly, and if he fails in it he is punished severely. And this duty extends far beyond the capital matters of theology, politics and economics, and into the most trivial matters of everyday life. Thus, in the average American city the man who, in the face of an organized public clamor (usually managed by interested parties) for the erection of an equestrian statue of Susan B. Anthony, the apostle of woman suffrage, in front of the chief railway station, or the purchase of a dozen leopards for the municipal zoo, or the dispatch of an invitation to the Structural Iron Workers Union to hold its next annual convention in the town Symphony Hall—the citizen who, for any logical reason, opposes such a proposal—on the ground, say, that Miss Anthony never mounted a horse in her life, or that a dozen leopards would be less useful than a gallows to hang the City Council, or that the Structural Iron Workers would spit all over the floor of Symphony Hall and knock down the busts of Bach, Beethoven and Brahms—this citizen is commonly denounced as an anarchist and a traitor. It is not only erroneous to think thus; it has come to be immoral. So on many other planes, high and low. For an American to question any of the articles of fundamental faith cherished by the majority is for him to run

grave risks of social disaster. The old English offense of "imagining the King's death" has been formally revived by the American courts, and hundreds of men and women are in jail for committing it, and it has been so enormously extended that, in some parts of the country at least, it now embraces such remote acts as believing that negroes should have equality before the law, and speaking the language of countries recently at war with the Republic, and conveying to a private friend a formula for making synthetic gin. All such toyings with illicit ideas are construed as *attentats* against democracy, which, in a sense, perhaps they are. For democracy is grounded upon so childish a complex of fallacies that it must be protected by a rigid system of taboos, else even half-wits would argue it to pieces. Its first concern must thus be to penalize the free play of ideas. In the United States this is not only its first concern, but also its last concern. No other enterprise, not even the trade in public offices and contracts, occupies the rulers of the land so steadily, or makes heavier demands upon their ingenuity and their patriotic passion.

§ 5

Sic Transit Gloria.—In New York, as in no other great city in the world, is one constantly entertained by the spectacle of the sudden inflation and equally sudden collapse of public figures of one sort or another. Rarely six months go by that some fellow, precipitately ballooned into prominence by assiduous log-rolling, publicity or the pervading numskullery of the herd, does not burst with a report so deafening that school-children for miles 'round are scared out of their wits. The next day he is heard of no more; his name is forgotten in a week; and in his place another balloon begins to blow up blind to the coming pin-prick.

Consider some of the eulogized magnificos of late years, each and every one without sound talent or ability, yet each and every one elevated by hocus-pocus

of this or that sort to a position of pseudo-importance in New York life. The honest "boy politician" who was elected mayor of New York and proclaimed to be at once Presidential timber and the hope of the nation; the dramatic critic who was looked upon as a Great Authority; the newspaper publisher who was by way of being the American Northcliffe until his newspapers one by one began to get sick; the great magazine genius who is now an office-boy; the illustrious gladiator who got the Divine Call to put Hearst out of business; the profound American dramatist whose plays even the mob began suddenly to laugh at; the celebrated humorist whose following sneaked out by way of the back door overnight; the great moving picture genius who is now a hired man working for real estate promoters; the famous novelist, acclaimed the peer of Flaubert, Zola and Balzac, who is now writing movies; the fearless, public-spirited man, burning with zeal to serve his country, who is now a press agent writing on space. . . . There are hundreds of them. One and all, they have their little day in court and then, *voilà!*—the bone-yard.

§ 6

Gayety in Siberia.—From a circular to exporters issued by an eminent international banking corporation:

The following calendar of bank and public holidays will be *celebrated* in September in the countries and states and on the dates enumerated below:

.....
 Sunday, Sept. 11—In Siberia and Ukraina:
 Beheading of St. John the Baptist.

§ 7

Satire.—Satire is the cosmic castor oil. It is the accused trying the jury, the primordial monkey descended from man. It lies deeply imbedded in the heart of every mortal, as it lies deeply imbedded in Nature itself. A free man votes for laws to fetter him; a Sultan of Turkey visits a bordello in Paris;

one of the profoundest of modern dramas is written by a lunatic; the name of the most foul of the sex diseases is borrowed from an idyllic poem; the ambition of the greatest American novelist is to write moving pictures; the owner of the Albany Night Boat bars from the newsstand on his vessel magazines with pictures of girls in bathing suits. . . .

And five of the six chapels of one of the most famous Episcopal churches in America are built at the expense of wealthy pew holders whose real names are, respectively, something closely resembling Einstein, Schoenberg, Kahlheimer, Morgenstern and Rabinowitz.

§ 8

Women and the Emotions.—The familiar fact that women have a greater capacity than men for controlling and concealing their emotions, especially in the duel of sex, is not an indication that they are *more* civilized, but a proof that they are *less* civilized. This capacity, so rare today, and withal so valuable and so worthy of respect, is a characteristic of savages, not of civilized men, and its loss is one of the penalties that the race has paid for the tawdry boon of civilization. Your true savage, reserved, dignified and courageous, knows how to mask his feelings, even in the face of the most desperate assault upon them; your civilized man is forever yielding to them. Civilization, in fact, grows more and more maudlin and hysterical; especially under democracy it tends to degenerate into a mere combat of crazes; the whole aim of practical politics is to keep the populace alarmed (and hence clamorous to be led to safety) by an endless series of hobgoblins, most of them imaginary. Wars are no longer waged by the will of superior men, capable of judging dispassionately and intelligently the causes behind them and the effects flowing out of them. They are now begun by first throwing a mob into a panic; they are ended only when it has spent its ferine fury. Here the effect of civilization has

been to reduce the noblest of the arts, once the repository of an exalted etiquette and the chosen avocation of the very best men of the race, to the level of a riot of peasants. All the wars of Christendom are now disgusting and degrading; the conduct of them has passed out of the hands of nobles and knights and into the hands of mob-orators, money-lenders, and atrocity-mongers. To recreate one's self with war in the grand manner, as Prince Eugene, Marlborough and the Old Dessauer knew it, one must now go among barbarian peoples.

Women are nearly always against war in modern times, for the reasons brought forward to justify it are usually either transparently dishonest or childishly sentimental, and hence provoke their scorn. But once the business is begun, they commonly favor its conduct à outrance, and are thus in accord with the theory of the great captains of more spacious days. In Germany, during the late war, the protests against the *Schrecklichkeit* practised by the imperial army and navy did not come from women, but from sentimental men; in England and the United States there is no record that any woman ever raised her voice against the blockade which destroyed hundreds of thousands of German children. I was on both sides of the bloody chasm during the war, and I cannot recall meeting a single woman who subscribed to the puerile doctrine that, in so vast a combat between nations, there could still be categories of non-combatants, with a right of asylum on armed ships and in garrisoned towns. This imbecility was maintained only by men, large numbers of whom simultaneously took part in wholesale massacres of such non-combatants. The women were superior to such hypocrisy. They recognized the nature of modern war instantly and accurately, and advocated no disingenuous efforts to conceal it.

§ 9

Virum Cano.—The most accurate

gauge of a public is to be had in its heroes. A public is betrayed by its admirations. Divide its hero by twenty-five and the result is an autobiography of the public. Roosevelt thus divided was the American public of his time: its brashness, resolution, impressive showiness, picturesque impudence, shallow ethics and philosophy. Woodrow Wilson thus divided was the American public of his time: its altiloquent buncombe, puritanical hypocrisy, spurious logical processes. Harding is the American public of today: its pollyanna faith in the sunshine of tomorrow, its trust in God and Lloyd George, its relapse from polysyllables that meant nothing to monosyllables that mean less. The public changes as it changes its heroes.

How can one better determine the quality of public taste, ambition, intelligence and dreams, for instance, than by an appraisal of the heroes of its favorite drama? There is no more revelatory instrument than applause. When a man claps his hands he synchronously gives himself away. Who and what then, in this light, are the creatures that the American public of today would emulate? The representative hero of the popular American play of today—to answer the question—is a man who substitutes a quick, superficial shrewdness for education and intelligence, who believes that virtue consists in frequent public eulogies of his mother, whose trust in women, democracy and hair salve is complete, and who makes love by talking.

§ 10

Literary Appreciation and Criticism in Our Leading Universities.—I offer to connoisseurs, without comment, the following critical review of a book called "Get Your Man!" by Ethel and James Dorrance, culled from a recent number of the *Cornell Alumni News*:

There is more good writing in this story than in either of the previous stories of this talented couple. The dialogue is sometimes a bit strained and formal, but again it shows directness and force. The plot is a combina-

tion of the detective and the love story. The man Marcus Moors is to get is the murderer of his father. The man Yukona Bruce is to "get" is the big boy friend of her childhood, now blinded to her worth by his zeal for revenge and given to some needless rudeness, perhaps, but still admirably developed by many experiences into a truly heroic figure. As a detective Marcus does not exactly shine; and though he gets his man, it is through luck—and Yukona—quite as much as by logic. But it makes a readable tale, and perhaps the cold human-engine-detective has palled on modern readers anyhow. As a story of the far North it properly emphasizes the elemental passions; yet it is a clean, well-constructed tale.

§ 11

Memories.—Some time ago I made casual mention in this place of two teachers of my youth, both drunken and disreputable men. One taught me to chew tobacco—an art that has done more, perhaps, to establish my evil repute in the world than even my Socinianism. The other introduced me to Rabelais, and so filled me with that taste for coarseness which now offends so many of my customers, lay and clerical. Neither ever came to a dignified position in academic circles. One abandoned pedagogy for the law, became involved in cases of a dubious nature, and finally disappeared into the shades which clothe third-rate attorneys. The other went upon a fearful drunk one Christmastide, got himself shanghaied on the water-front, and is supposed to have fallen overboard from a British tramp, bound east for Cardiff. At all events, he has never been heard from since.

Two evil fellows—and yet I hold their memories in affection, and believe that they were the best teachers I ever had. For in both there was something a great deal more valuable than mere pedagogical skill and diligence, and even more valuable than correct demeanor, and that was a passionate love of sound literature. This love, given reasonably receptive soil, they knew how to communicate, as a man can always communicate whatever moves him profoundly. Neither ever made the slight-

est effort to "teach" literature, as the business is carried on by the usual idiot schoolmaster. Both had a vast contempt for the text-books that were official in their school, and used to entertain the boys by pointing out the errors in them. Both were full of derisory objections to the principal heroes of such books: Scott, Irving, Pope, Jane Austen, Dickens, Trollope, Tennyson. But both, discoursing in their disorderly way upon heroes of their own, were magnificently eloquent and persuasive. The boy who could listen to one of them intoning Shakespeare and stand unmoved was a dull fellow indeed. The boy who could resist the other's enthusiasm for the old essayists was intellectually deaf, dumb and blind.

I often wonder if their expoundings of their passions and prejudices would have been half so charming if they had been wholly respectable men, like their colleagues of the school faculty. It is not likely. A healthy boy is in constant revolt against the sort of men who surround him at school. Their puerile pedantries, their Christian Endeavor respectability, their sedentary pallor, their curious preference for the dull and uninteresting, their general air of so many Y. M. C. A. secretaries—these things infallibly repel the youth who is above milksopery. In every boys' school the favorite teacher is one who occasionally swears like a cavalryman, or is reputed to keep a jug in his room, or is known to receive a scented note every morning. Boys are good judges of men, as girls are good judges of women. It is not by accident that most of them, at some time or other, long to be cowboys or ice-wagon drivers, and that none of them, not obviously diseased in mind, ever longs to be a Sunday-school superintendent. Put that judgment to a simple test. What would become of a nation in which all of the men were, at heart, Sunday-school superintendents—or Y. M. C. A. secretaries, or pedagogues? Imagine it in conflict with a nation of cowboys and ice-wagon drivers. Which would be the stronger, and which would be the

more honest, intelligent, resourceful, enterprising and courageous?

§ 12

Dramatic Taste in America.—I quote from the text of the play:

BETTY

(*Placing lamp in the window.*) You still want this in the window, Maw?

MAW

Always, Betty, every night, dear. (*She sits by the fireside, takes the big family Bible and opens it.*)

BETTY

Oh, Maw, if our Joe was only here!

MAW

(*Stroking Betty's head tenderly.*) There, there, Betty! We'll hear from him some day. I know we will. Why, I keep prayin' and prayin', and every time I pray I know the prayer is goin' to be answered.

BETTY

People don't always get what they pray for, Maw. Lots of 'em don't. And you do believe we'll hear from Joe, Maw, honestly?

MAW

I know it. I know it. (*She puts her hand on the Bible, bows her head. The door opens slowly and Joe appears. Betty and Joe stare at each other. The girl does not recognize her brother, whom she had not seen in ten years. Maw turns suddenly and gazes at him. She rises slowly, goes to him and puts her arms about him. Not a word is spoken. The mother's prayer has been answered, as she knew it would be, and when she speaks it is almost in a whisper.*) Joey, my Joey, and you came right in the middle of my prayer!

You say that I am a low jester and have made it up? Or that it is exhumed from some old barnstorming opus of the James A. Herne—"Hazel Kirke" period? Nothing of the kind. It is from the manuscript of a play that has achieved one of the two greatest successes the American stage of the last five years has known, a success topped only by a play twice as full of the same sort of stuff. The name of the play, some of you will recall, is "Turn to the Right."

§ 13

A Profound Tome.—I have before me a volume of six hundred and eight

pages and three hundred and seventy-two illustrations, elegantly bound in blue and gold. Its title: "Sex and Sex Worship"; its author: the Hon. O. A. Wall, M.D., Ph.G., Ph.M. The volume is seriously presented by the author and publishers as "a scientific treatise on sex, its nature and function, and its influence on art, science, architecture and religion," and is offered to the public at large in that guise. Among the illustrations in this serious sex work I note (1) photograph of the Barrison Sisters in a naughty song and dance act; (2) photograph of meerschaum pipe with the carving of a hussy on it; (3) photograph of two carrots of peculiar contour; (4) photograph of Irish potato ditto; (5) photograph of sweet potato ditto; (6) photograph of elecampane root ditto; (7) photograph of parsnip root ditto; and (8) reproductions of all the famous bar-room paintings of fifteen years ago. . . . Only the flippant works of such men as Havelock Ellis may not be circulated generally.

§ 14

Four Years After.—It is curious to note how completely the soldiers of the late army have forgotten the grievances which harassed them during their service—grievances which, according to all the prophets of the time, were to throw red glares into our politics for years to come. I recall three salient ones: the grievance against conscription, that against the insulting uppishness of officers, and that against the extortions and hypocrisies of the Y. M. C. A. The first, of course, has died a natural death. The great majority of drafted men were anything but eager for service, and a large proportion of them, as the records show, made an effort to escape it, but once they were in there would have been nothing save a fresh invasion of their *amour propre* in any confession that they longed to get out, and so they gradually convinced themselves, as all of us do, that what was necessary was

voluntary. Today, as veterans, they seem to be favorable, in the main, to compulsory military service, which is also very natural, for a simple man usually believes that the best way to ease his own wrongs is to inflict them on somebody else. Here we have also an explanation of the ex-conscript's extraordinary hatred of slackers, *i.e.*, of men who managed to escape what he had to endure. He would be less hot if the charms of slacking had not once floated tantalizingly through his own mind. The men who actually volunteered are a great deal less indignant about the slackers, for they hold them in contempt, and one never hates anyone one holds in contempt. Hate is reserved for those one somehow envies.

Here we deal with elemental facts of human nature. More obscure is the complete subsidence of all the old complaints about the tyranny of officers. The records seem to show clearly that the gap separating officers from men was greater in the American army than in any other engaged in the war, on either side. Men were punished ferociously for the most harmless failures in politeness to young lieutenants, and all fraternizing, however salutary, seems to have been frowned upon by the high command. Even women nurses, who ranked as officers socially, were absolutely forbidden to treat the men in their charge as equals. This state of affairs caused a great deal of discontent, and complaints poured in upon Congress, and it was widely predicted that, once the army was disbanded, many a fresh young captain or lieutenant would get a beating, and that the veterans would demand safeguards against like oppressions in future wars. But now the matter is heard of no longer. If the American Legion still has it under consideration, then the news has never got into the newspapers. As a matter of fact, the Legion tends to be dominated more and more by the officers in it, and its public acts reflect their class interests and their peculiar politics. Its spectacular war upon radicalism is certainly not a war that promises much benefit

to poor men; it shows, in every detail, the special fears and prejudices of well-to-do men, which is to say, of ex-officers.

Finally, there is the Y. M. C. A. Practically all the soldiers who came home denounced it, and there was gaudy talk of having it investigated by Congress. But the wealthy industrial magnates who support it seem to have shut off that gabble completely, and today the Y. M. C. A., if not exactly in good repute, is at least quite safe. Within a year after the armistice, indeed, it began to venture upon "drives" in the old manner, and most of them went unchallenged by the soldiery. Today, I daresay, its income is as large as ever. It is an enormously effective engine for regimenting opinion, and is thus viewed with great favor by those *entrepreneurs* who follow the Hon. Roger Babson in the theory that the best way to safeguard property is to subsidize clergymen.

This theory, I believe, is sound. Under our system, all attacks upon property are *ipso facto* criminal, and so the majority of the clergy are against them instinctively, and oppose them vigorously and to good effect. In the South, where capitalism is newer than in the North and hence less delicate and devious in its operations, every cotton-mill owner openly keeps at least one church, and its rev. pastor as openly defends him against the murmurs of his slaves. The Y. M. C. A. is an even more efficient ally, for it has baits so seductive that even the slaves succumb to them. Basketball takes a proletarian's mind off the economic interpretation of history, and the chance to learn double-entry bookkeeping, personal magnetism or show-card writing is very likely to make him forget the theory of surplus values. No doubt the ex-soldiers have been gathered in in the same way. With the saloons closed, they are forced into the Y. M. C. A.'s in thousands of lonely towns, and once they are in they forget their old grievance, and so it is heard of no more.

The only permanent result of the

doughboy's dislike of the Y. M. C. A. during the actual war seems to be a radical change in the aims and methods of the Salvation Army. The Salvationists very shrewdly capitalized that dislike. As rivals to the putty-faced praying-brothers who rooked the soldiers at the Y. M. C. A. cigarette-stands, they sent out pretty girls (or amiable women of more ample years) who gave them doughnuts for nothing. Moreover, they sent their agents into the areas where there were actual soldiers, instead of confining them prudently to the regions where the soldiers were outnumbered by the quartermasters, clerks, stenographers, press-agents, generals, judge-advocates, and other such *vivandiers*. In consequence, the Salvation Army was greatly esteemed by the men, and in second consequence news of the fact got home and greatly improved its collections. Now, having got rich, it grows highly respectable, and one no longer encounters its sad bands of ex-drunkards and lacrymose ex-fancy-women on the street-corners, blowing cornets and beating bass-drums to the glory of Allah. The change is one that I deplore. Next to the saloon, the Salvation Army was the most picturesque and romantic thing in our national life, in the old days of liberty. Today, all our towns are dull and drab. The Americano becomes a melancholy

man, herded dismally in moving-picture parlors. It is no insignificant fact that the movies are seen in the dark and are without color. The old America glittered and was rosy; the old Salvationists wore red shirts.

§ 15

The Movies.—Somehow, whenever I hear anyone speak of the movies as a great æsthetic enterprise, I think of George Bernard Shaw's reply to M. Goldfish-Goldwyn when the latter tried to urge the elusive Shaw that it was his duty to write for the screens controlled by the company of which the M. Goldfish-Goldwyn is the leading magnifico. After listening for two hours to the film impresario's impassioned eulogies of the movies and excited testimonials to their rare beauty, form, symmetry, and general æsthetic content, Shaw scratched his nose and shook his head. "No," he said, "I don't think we can ever get together. You see, you are interested in art, and I'm interested in money."

§ 16

Epitaph.—If, after I depart this vale, you ever remember me and have thought to please my ghost, forgive some sinner and wink your eye at some homely girl.



UNHAPPINESS comes to a man in two ways. He can either be married again or yet.



Character Sketch

By John F. Lord

SHE hated his imbecility, his foolish grins, his idiotic conduct. He persisted in following her around. One day the whole affair disgusted her. She determined to show her absolute contempt for him. Going up to him, she deliberately snapped her fingers in his face. He wore a look of ludicrous comprehension, as he produced a pair of dice.



Prelude

By Aline Kilmer

SO many sing of splendid loves,
Of Guinevere and Launcelot.
Of Aucassin and Nicolette
They love to sing. But I do not.

I sing of little loves that glow
Like tapers shining through the rain.
Of little loves that break themselves
Like moths against the window-pane.



A WOMAN'S virtue is like a beacon which isn't noticed until it goes out.



The Top of the Ladder

By Ruth Suckow

I

ALBERT VOGEL was a good fellow, but quiet. He had never done much—just taken his father's place in the store, a general store in the country town of Burt, which he carried on with his Uncle Will Vogel and his cousin Earl. Uncle Will still ran the business, treating Albert and Earl as clerks, sending them out to do the delivering with a wagon and a big umbrella labeled "Vogel Bros." and an old nag. He jollied Albert about all the unmarried women who came into the store, claiming that they had come to see him, and treated him like twenty instead of fifty.

Albert was still unmarried, one of the four bachelors in Burt. He lived in the house his father had bought some thirty years before, a white house with a little steeple and a lightning rod, with two huge evergreens growing before the front windows and filling the parlor and dining-room with a dim greenish gloom. His sister, a widow, Mrs. Cassie Marvin, kept house for him. She had one daughter, Cecil, a tall, bony, light-haired girl of nineteen whom she still thought of as a child.

People joked a good deal about Albert Vogel, teasing the young girls and the old girls about him whenever he was mentioned, and still saying that he was a nice, obliging fellow, after all. They would always rather have him wait on them in the store than Will, or than Earl. They felt sorry for him, said that he really deserved more than he had. They said that he had wanted to marry Jennie Bailey, and then Ola Fitzsimmons, to whom he had sent two

postal cards when he was away in Chicago—but somehow he never put himself forward enough. They said that Cassie made him toe the mark, and that Cecil was "no company at all." There was only a cat which Albert surreptitiously petted, and the flowers that Joe Ramsey had sent from his Michigan estate.

But they had no conception of what Joe Ramsey meant to Albert. They had all heard about Joe Ramsey, of course, and those who had been to the Vogel house had seen the views of the Michigan estate, the reproduction of Chloe Ramsey's portrait in an art magazine, Chloe's wedding picture, and the article on the Ramsey works in *Business Success*.

They all knew about Joe Ramsey, how he worked for old Eli Vogel when he was a boy and had slept in the back part of the store, how Albert had lent him eleven dollars to get to Chicago, and how now he was "worth his millions." Some of them could remember him as a dark, surly-looking boy who went about with Albert Vogel. They exclaimed when Albert told them about the Michigan estate, with the thirty-six servants and the eleven automobiles, and said—"Just think!"—but they had no notion of what it all meant to Albert. They had heard it all so often that they hardly listened when Albert said, proudly and yet wistfully:

"Yes, sir, Joe used to work right here in the store and slept in the back part. Well, when he wanted to strike out for Chicago, I lent him all I had, eleven dollars I'd saved up to go to the State Fair. Didn't hear of him for I don't know how many years—then ten years

ago he wrote to me asking me to visit him. And here he was, worth his millions, and living on that great Michigan estate! He has everything that heart could wish. Yes, sir, he's right on top of the ladder. But he's just as simple, just like anybody else—and all of them."

It made an impressive story for people in Burt to tell to strangers, however.

This evening Mr. and Mrs. Livermore had dropped in to see Cassie and Albert. Although it was hot summer weather, they were all sitting in the stuffy parlor, for Mrs. Livermore declared that she could not stand the bugs and mosquitoes outside. Albert had been sitting amiably silent until somehow Cassie managed to switch the talk from the split in the Baptist church to Joe Ramsey.

Cassie listened only with a non-committal, half-sarcastic air when Albert talked to her after a trip to the Ramseys—whom she called "your Ramseys," and who, often as they invited Albert, had "never seen fit" to ask her, or Cecil, to come too. But Albert had noticed that she liked to bring them into the conversation when other people were there, and that if he forgot the thirty-six servants she was sure to mention them.

Albert got out from the lowest shelf of the bookcase the large manila folder in which he kept the pictures and magazines, and hitching up his chair toward Mrs. Livermore's so that their knees almost touched, he reverently gave the pictures to her one by one and "explained about them." She, in turn, passed them on to Mr. Livermore saying "Look, Dudley!" or "See, there's the swimming-pool, Dudley."

Albert carefully took out first the view of the estate as a whole. He pointed with his forefinger that was slender but a little roughened and grimed always from handling the goods:

"Now, this is the drive up to the estate. You see how it goes winding along between those trees—well, those

are all beech trees. Mr. Ramsey got the idea of a beech avenue from some big estate in England. Now, that road is all just as hard as a floor."

"Fellow could have some good driving there," Mr. Livermore put in jocularly.

"Now, this dark line you see along here leading up to the house—that's a hedge of all kinds of wonderful flowering bushes, all kept just the same height and all blooming at different seasons of the year."

"All kept the same height!" Mrs. Livermore exclaimed.

"Oh, yes, but then there's the gardeners to do it," Cassie put in. "How many is it he's got, Albert?"

"Oh, several," Albert said hastily.

He was eager to get on with his explanation. "Now, of course, this is the house, but I won't tell about that now, there's another view shows it better. Over here you see the little lake, here the gardens, and over here, this is a great wood of the natural Michigan timber that Mr. Ramsey left—but I'll tell you more about that later, too."

Mrs. Livermore looked, gathering up all the details that interested her, then passed it on to Mr. Livermore, saying—"Look, Dudley, over here's the gardens."

Mr. Livermore studied it vacantly, breathing heavily. He was an enormously fat man with three chins covered with short, damp, dark bristles. In the stuffy air of the parlor, moisture stood on his fat, creased forehead; and his thumb left a faint, moist pattern on the "view" which he tried surreptitiously to rub off against his trouser leg.

"Now, this shows the house!" Albert said triumphantly.

Mrs. Livermore was always interested in houses, since they were "thinking of building." She bent over to look.

"Well, I guess that's a bigger one than *we'll* build!" she cried.

"Well, I guess!" Cassie said with a short laugh. "How many rooms are there, Albert?"

It was a mansion of modified Eng-

lish design. Albert pointed out the sun parlor, the great hall, the servants' quarters, and "explained" how in the great hall there was a fireplace so big ten men could stand side by side in it, how the stairway was said to be the finest in any house in America, and how above it hung the portrait of Chloe that some great artist had painted and that he had a picture of in an art magazine.

"Chloe! She's the one that married some foreigner, ain't she?" Mrs. Livermore asked. "That her picture over the bookcase?"

Albert frowned a little, for he had not yet come to Chloe's wedding, and he liked to tell the whole thing methodically. He let Cassie begin the story of Chloe's wedding—how she had married an English lord and lived now in one of those great castles in England, about the twelve bridesmaids all in blue and silver, her colors, the little flower girls—minister in robes—

"But go on, Albert, you tell about it," she said impatiently. "You were there."

Albert tried to tell about the wedding, even if it was out of its proper place, and although it was impossible to make the Livermores understand how it really was. And he told about the English lord, Lord Broughton, who was "just as English as you make 'em but as nice and simple as if he was anybody." He told how, when he had come to the wedding, Chloe and Lord Broughton had driven to the station to meet him, and how Lord Broughton had talked, just as nice and friendly as anyone.

"Yes, well, lots of these rich girls marry foreigners, you know," Mrs. Livermore said wisely. "It's the title they're after. And lots of 'em are awful unhappy. What was that book that came out a while ago?"

Albert tried eagerly to explain that Chloe and Lord Broughton were not at all like that, but it was useless. To them, Lord Broughton was an "English lord," a kind of curiosity, scarcely a real person at all. Albert could not

seem to make them feel the wonder of his having moved on equal terms with such a man as that, who knew everything and had been everywhere. During that drive, he had sat between one of the greatest beauties in America and an English nobleman! It was like a story. And Joe Ramsey had made it come true. He was almost reluctant to get down Chloe's wedding photograph and show it to Mrs. Livermore, although he was pleased when she exclaimed over it:

"Say! Well, she is pretty, all right enough. Look at that veil, would you?"

"How much do you suppose that cost?" Cassie demanded.

"Well, I guess so. Look here, Dudley."

"Who's that?"

"Why, that girl Albert's been telling about that married the foreigner."

"Oh!"

Albert took the photograph delicately from Mr. Livermore's moist, indifferent grasp and gave a lingering look at it as he replaced it on the bookcase. He knew so perfectly the lovely drooping form, the long slender lines of the white figure, the bent head under the flowing veil, the hair like a thick dark cloud, shadowy and vague; and he could see the pure white skin and the blue eyes set deep, in black lashes.

"This picture came out in some magazine," he said, "but I never could get hold of a copy."

"Well, you've got the real thing," Mrs. Livermore said.

"Yes. Well—" he took out the next view—"now these are the gardens."

He tried to "explain" about them, about the sunken pool edged with white narcissi, and the little tea house that was modeled after an old English inn, where Mrs. Ramsey had once entertained a great explorer when Albert was there; the rose garden that it took one gardener all his time to look after, and from which that bush of big pink roses in the yard had come.

"Oh, those roses you gave the ladies to decorate the tables with at the Alumni banquet?" Mrs. Livermore broke in.

"Yes, those. I admired them so when I was there once," Albert said modestly, "and just a few days after I got home, here, Mrs. Ramsey sent me a bush. But that's the way they all are. Just as generous as that."

"They ask you there real often, don't they?" Mrs. Livermore said curiously.

"Yes," said Albert. His voice trembled slightly. "That's the way with Joe Ramsey. He never forgets a friend. Once he worked in our grocery store—now he's one of the richest men in America, almost. He's got everything that heart could wish for. But he never forgets."

"Funny he asks just you and nobody else here," Mrs. Livermore mused. "But then you were good friends, weren't you? And of course you lent him the money to go away."

Albert modestly said nothing.

He could see that Mrs. Livermore was getting fidgety, although he had not yet come to the end of the views, and had not shown the article in *Business Success*.

In the intervals of his explanation she began talking to Cassie—"Had you heard that Leone Badger had gone back to her husband? Yes, they're going to try to get along with each other again"—while she rocked, holding the photograph in her hand. Mr. Livermore was quite dumb. He took the photograph when it was handed to him, stared at it agonizingly, and held it, breathing hard. Soon the views were forgotten altogether.

"Yes; well, I think it's right they should," Mrs. Livermore was saying comfortably. "I tell you I don't believe in all these divorces. Look at Nan Clark—and her husband—"

"Albert, you don't want to let any of these grass widows get hold of you," Mr. Livermore said with heavy jocularly.

Albert tried to smile. They had not understood all the wonder of the Ramseys—all they would remember were the thirty-six servants, the eleven automobiles, the English lord, and that the bushes were kept the same height.

These were not the things that really mattered, although he collected all such details with artless admiration and repeated them as evidence of Joe Ramsey's success. The real wonder was that success—that Joe Ramsey, who had worked for Vogel Bros. and gone barefoot with Albert Vogel, had risen as high as they once had dreamed when, two boys, they lay out under the big oak tree by the spring in Riegel's pasture and said what they would do some day. It was not only that Joe was not proud and had not forgotten. He *was* proud. He had forgotten all the rest of Burt. Albert Vogel alone was still chosen as the friend of Joe Ramsey.

This sustained him. This made him feel, in spite of his loneliness, a kind of shy wondering pride in himself. It made him think that it was something different, something a little choice in him, which had set him apart from the rest of Burt, had kept him solitary.

No one in Burt understood. They even made fun of Albert's pride in Joe Ramsey, wondered if he was quite as much as Albert made him out to be. But this, while it made him still lonelier, fed his pride. How could they understand, knowing nothing of such a life as the Ramseys lived, the beauty of the days as they passed on the Michigan estate, the exquisiteness of the details of life, the wonderful people who came, the talk.

It was like a fairy tale. The Livermores could not even imagine such things. He had shared it. There was a room in that great house called "Albert's room"—an exquisite room where he felt more at home than in his own bedroom upstairs that faced the upper branches of the evergreen. There was one great deep chair in that wonderful living-room that Chloe playfully called his, where she insisted on leading him whenever he came. Sitting there, in the afternoon silence, how often he had heard a hidden clock strike the hour and chime a little golden tune. There was his own place at the long somber table in the dining-room; and in the little gay-colored breakfast-room where

he often had Chloe to pour his coffee in the morning.

They treated him, all of them, even Rupert, the boy who was a wild lad, always off somewhere or other, with a kind of beautiful affectionate ownership, as set apart in a special friendship from all the rest of the world. No wonder that he "fussed with his nails," as Cassie said; that he would not let Cecil buy cheap records for the phonograph; that he would not go about the store, as Uncle Will did, in an old vest and shirt sleeves. He belonged to the Ramseys.

While Cassie and the Livermores talked, he gathered up the views and put them carefully back in the manila folder. The lake, the wood—he loved them all as if they had been his own. In fact, he often said that he took more pride and pleasure in them than Joe himself. He had had tea in that tea house—had drunk it out of an old English cup. He had sat among the birches in the woods and read a book written by a man with whom he had talked the night before. He had talked with a real author. He put the things away reverently.

When the Livermores left, he went hospitably out onto the porch with Cassie and stood there while Mr. Livermore, with terrible puffings, and with advice from Mrs. Livermore, cranked his Ford.

"You better come in," Cassie said to him then, "or you'll be howling about your rheumatism again tomorrow. My! Seems to me there's an awful dew."

"Oh, I'll sit here a few minutes. So hot in there," he said.

II

HE sat down in the porch swing of green-painted slats swung on creaking iron chains until he heard Cassie at work with the bread in the kitchen. Then he went softly out to the east yard where he kept his flowers. He did not want Cassie to hear him.

They stood motionless in the hot, damp night, pale-colored and tall. All

of them had come from the Ramsey gardens—Canterbury bells of frosty blue and lavender, larkspur, beautiful pinks, an azalea, a Japanese hydrangea, flame-tinted dahlias.

Touching them, catching their faint midsummer scent, he could vision the great gardens. He could remember wonderful solitary morning hours in them, such happiness as he had not dreamed of having since he was a boy; and afternoons when he had sat, pleased and listening, with others in the tea house, introduced to them as "Mr. Ramsey's oldest friend"; one night that he had never told a soul about, when Chloe had laughingly taken him by the hand and led him out to show him the sunken pool by moonlight. He had felt the delicate touch of Chloe's hand—in blue, with silver in her hair—like the most beautiful romantic dream he had ever dared to dream. He remembered the pool with the motionless white narcissi all about the dark water—Think of it!

Why, the whole thing was a miracle. It kept alive his faith in the wonder of life. Joe had scaled the heights. He was on top of the ladder. To think his eleven dollars had helped to create all this marvelous beauty. He often said to Joe: "Joe, what do you want of me? You've got everything—what do you want of me?" Yet he did. Joe wanted him. There was something special that he could do for Joe, something to pay for all the beauty Joe gave him. Joe—with riches, a beautiful home, a handsome wife, a brilliant son, Chloe, everything!

Joe made light of his success. He pretended that it was nothing. Just because he had everything on earth, Albert said, he had to grumble at himself for having it. He said the business ran itself and was no fun any more. He said that he hardly got a chance to know his wife and children. That the good days were the days when he had set out for Chicago on Albert's eleven dollars, with everything before him. That was just Joe's old, surly, dissatisfied way.

Albert would laugh fondly at him, and praise him and his possessions with naïve, trustful wonder. Of course he was satisfied—if any one had everything on earth to make him so! He always laughed and talked Joe out of it. Of course Joe didn't really mean one word of it. Joe's life was perfect, as nearly as anything on this earth could be.

Albert wondered when he would go to the estate this year. He had put off buying a summer suit until he knew. He meant to go, even if Uncle Will did make a fuss and talk about some people always having vacations. Oh, what these visits meant to him! He lived on them all year. On these hot nights he longed for the coolness of his room there that opened out upon a high secluded porch. He was afraid that Joe was lonely since Chloe was gone. Rupert was away again, too—had gone off to the South Seas in a cruising vessel. Mrs. Ramsey always said that he could talk Joe into a better humor than anyone else. He had a feeling that he ought to be there. He looked on them all as his own. He had transferred all his own hopes of happiness, all his pride to them, where it was certain and secure.

He had had a dim notion of hearing a bicycle on the walk; and now Cassie called out to him in an excited voice:

"Albert! Telegram for you!"

"Is it from Michigan?" Albert asked.

"Well, open it!" Cassie cried, impatiently.

But Albert was slow. He had to look it all over first, while the depot boy stood leaning against the porch.

Cassie afterward declared with morbid relish to everyone who stopped her on the street or came in to talk about it: "Albert honestly got just as white as those curtains. I thought he was going to faint dead away."

He was white, a sick white, with blue lips.

Cassie demanded:

"What is it?"

He could not answer, but gave her the telegram and went dazedly upstairs.

"What is it, mamma?" Cecil begged fretfully.

"Why," Cassie said, her face blank with amazement, "Joe Ramsey's shot himself."

Cassie hurried upstairs after Albert. As she said afterward, she did not dare to leave him alone. She stood in the doorway of his room while he slowly and tremulously got his clean shirts out of the drawer. She did not dare to bombard him with questions as she would usually have done.

"Are you going?" she asked.

He did not answer, but she could see that he was packing his bag.

"There's still some of that brandy downstairs. You better let me get you a glass."

"What do I want with brandy?"

"Albert, you don't know how you look. You'll be fainting away first thing you know."

He went on packing. Cassie had never seen him like this. It excited her. When she could stand it no longer, she asked:

"What do you suppose it was? Do you suppose he lost his money?"

"No," Albert said fiercely. "How could he lose his money?"

"Well, but it must have been something. Didn't him and his wife get along together?"

He disdained to answer this. As if the Ramseys were just like people in Burt!

But his self-control soon melted under the force of the blow. By the time he came downstairs he was trembling, and said to Cassie, with a frightened look in his eyes:

"It must have been an accident. What else could it have been? He had everything on earth. There wasn't a thing—"

He kept brooding over it, dazed and unbelieving, until he left for the train. It was the four-ten that steamed away into a red-glowing East while the thick early dew was still on the sweet clover along the tracks. This was the journey he had always made with such anticipation. Now he sat with all thought

suspended until he should know why—
why . . .

III

A WEEK later Albert came back. Cassie was sewing in the dining-room when she heard him bang the screen door and set down his bag heavily. She motioned with her lips to Cecil: "Uncle Albert's got home"—and got up.

"Albert!" she called.

"Yes."

"That you?"

She went into the parlor.

Albert had sat down in a rocking-chair, without taking off his hat. His face was perspiring and pale. He raised his eyes. The shy, gentle, trusting look had gone out of them. They were full of a great desolation, of defeat and failure rather than grief.

Cassie said eagerly, but a little fearfully:

"Well . . . what did you find out?"

"Well . . ." Albert said heavily.

"He shot himself, all right."

"Was it an accident?" Cassie demanded—yet knowing the answer.

"No."

His hands lay limp on the chair arms,

moist and grimed with cinders from the journey.

Cassie noticed them as she asked:

"Was it he'd lost his money?"

"No."

"Hadn't! Why, what then? What'd happened?"

Albert made a gesture. "Nothing."

"Nothing! He didn't shoot himself for nothing! What do you mean?"

"Nobody knows." Albert moved his lips as if he had strength to state nothing but the bare facts. "He just went into the bathroom and blew out his brains. He left a note saying life wasn't worth a damn."

Cassie sat aghast. The words sounded strange on Albert's gentle lips, strange in the clean, quiet, small-town parlor, in the thick summer air.

Cassie was too dumfounded to say a word. She gazed at Albert, seeing that he looked as if all the life had gone out of him.

"I'm going up. I'm tired," he said heavily.

She wanted to ask about the funeral, and whether Chloe and her husband had come, but she could not then. She only sat there listening to him climb the stairs, with hollow, lifeless steps, and close the door of his stuffy little bedroom.



October Corn

By Hortense Flexner

RUSTY soldiers
Still drilling in broken ranks,
With your bent bayonets,
Your flapping arms,
And the crows above you—
You can not make me believe
You have won the battle!



Night and Morning

By Vivian Yeiser Laramore

THE night oozed a million stars, and the wind flung great incoherent sobs around us. No wonder that we clung together, awed by a symphony of sighs. You who had never sought my arms before, found them without seeking. Wrapped in starlight, and buffeted by the wind, I shielded you from I knew not what. The strength of a thousand warriors beat in my veins, and the tenderness of a thousand mothers kept my arms from crushing you.

The night is gone, and the dawn appears, gray-eyed and stark. There is nothing to protect you from; the streets are dull and orderly, and the park discloses only empty peanut sacks and broken balloons. In such a light love laughs, and is gone.



Gypsy Gold

By Charles Divine

I WOULD not loose the bonds I feel
Lest I enjoy the less
The wood-wild call across the hills
Where gods and winds caress.

No time can tarnish gipsy gold
When stolen piece by piece;
I would not loose the bonds I feel
Lest all my thieving cease.



Hang It All

By Charles G. MacArthur and Lloyd D. Lewis

I

HOAKS had eight hours more to live.

Coming from a physician, that announcement would have caused him to smile. Coming, as it did, from the sheriff, it threw him into a horrible funk.

True, it was expected. The judge had designated the day and hour long before in passing sentence of death upon him. But until the very eve of his execution, Hoaks had thought of nothing less than he thought of death. All his meditations had been on the adventures of an interesting lifetime.

Sometimes he had mentioned the event to his visitors at the jail, but always with light-hearted detachment, as if his death were the remote misfortune of a second cousin. Once he said that his only regret on going to the gallows was that he had discovered Freud too late to get an idea of what it was all about. It was not until only eight hours remained that he knew, to his own bitter dissatisfaction, that he was going to break down.

Realization of the rope gathered like a pestilential fog all around him. His knees banged together, his face twitched, and he was powerless to control himself. These manifestations of fright were abominable to Hoaks, but enormously pleasing to his guards. His former sang froid had seemed indecent to them, as predicating a disgusting four-flush in the face of conditions no sane man

could lightly bear. And as the clock's impersonal ticks slowly changed their superman into a whey-faced scaramouch, they nudged each other and frequently went downstairs to report the progress of his fear.

Their prisoner could have taken the part of a stage villain without make-up. Indeed, it was this unfortunate resemblance to that type that had convicted him. The sweeping handle-bar mustaches, the beetling brow, the savage sunken eyes, and the rapacious lines of his mouth entered more into the consideration of the jury than the evidence, and completely counteracted the pathos of his comparative youth.

The effect of his present terror added a goblinsque cast to his features which only emphasized his resemblance to a stock company Simon Legree.

A rapping on the death cell door caused one of the guards to hoist his vast and vested bulk from the chair and turn the lock. The jailer, tidy in brass buttons and canvas covered hat, stepped softly into the room. Hoaks' look was a desperate query. His words were a squall.

"Have you heard from the governor?"

The jailer unglued his thick lips and made them smile. He slowly shook his head several times and contemplated his prisoner coldly, as a sophisticated person might watch the antics of a sword swallower.

As Hoaks buried his head in his arms, the jailer beckoned a guard with a lift of his head. Both smiled.

"Not so stuck on himself now," murmured the jailer.

"Pale as a goose," responded the guard in a joyous stage whisper.

"Hoaks," asked the jailer aloud, "how do you feel?"

The question, meant to be sympathetic, was plainly exultant. It was unanswered.

"Do you want to see the parson, or do you still think religion's the bunk?"

Hoaks smiled foolishly and stuck his fingers in his mouth for answer. The jailer conferred briefly with the guards.

"Something's got to be done or he'll die of fright," one of them said.

"I'll get the rev'rend," decided the jailer, and left.

II

THE Rev. Paul Parker was the mystery of Sangamon county and the principal feature of every execution there.

He was a mystery because he chose to be one. He studiously cultivated the dark manner and the sepulchral voice. His appearance in the jail had the effect of trance materializations. They were made on tip-toe and rubber heel, and always at the psychological moment. Save for his conversations with the doomed, he spoke only when he was spoken to, and then in mysterious monosyllables.

He was the central figure at all executions because he wished to be. He made his office as theatric as possible. He dyed his hair a glossy black. His eyes were jet and rolling. His face was lank and pale.

But his principal asset was his indisputable way with the dying. This talent had become apparent years before, when he had popped up at the jail to comfort a strait-jacket case. The subsequent hanging had come off with unprecedented smoothness and dispatch. Thereafter he was always in demand and his reputation

flourished. He talked with them and prayed with them, and the state's destined dead changed from howling demons to stoic saints.

But what it was he told them no one ever knew, and he would never say. The newspapers made much of the mystery and the editors of Sunday supplements laid for his hangings. Each one gave them a chance to print his picture. The public and the Rev. Mr. Parker liked that idea.

III

HE nodded benignly at Hoaks and austere at the guards as they admitted him to the death cell. Hoaks ignored his hand.

"I don't want to see you or talk to you," he began belligerently. "I didn't send for you. I'm not interested in your—line."

"That is because you don't know what my line is," responded the man of God unctuously, removing his gloves.

"I don't want to know. Save your breath."

The Rev. Mr. Parker parted his coat-tails with extreme care and sat down at Hoaks' right hand.

"It's all blah!" the doomed man exploded.

"I know it."

"Why try to stuff it down *my* throat, then?"

"I'm not. I merely want to congratulate you."

"Is it a reprieve?" cried Hoaks, with a sudden rekindling of hope.

"Better than that. You are going to die promptly on schedule."

"I don't know what you mean—"

"I mean you are the luckiest man in the world, for the simple reason that you are getting out of it. Once, in Pittsburgh—"

"To hell with Pittsburgh," interrupted Hoaks, angrily. "What's the joke here? What gives you the idea that hanging is such great luck?"

"What gives you the idea it isn't," countered the holy clerk. "What is

more horrible than to go on living? We grow old. We lose our appetites, our illusions and our teeth. We have disgusting physical symptoms. If we drink, we get bad reputations. If we eat, we get bad stomachs. If we don't, we starve. Our wives disgrace us by running away with professors of theosophy or else make us unhappy with frump fidelity. We are elected to the school board. We join the First Baptist Church. We vote the Republican ticket. We pay thievish taxes. We stand up in subways; read billboards, newspapers, menus, theatre programs and Dr. Frank Crane. We pay a dollar and war tax to see trulls play chemically pure virgins, or, worse, four dollars to hear them. We grub and sweat for years to buy oil stocks, flivvers, phonographs, pianolas and Dr. Eliot's Five Foot Shelf of Books. We spend a lifetime cultivating friendships, only to find out that our loved ones recite 'The Shooting of Dan McGrew,' or like to talk about the sales tax. The President joined the Eagles yesterday. What's the use of living anyhow?"

"This is an incongruous place for humor," suggested Hoaks.

"Humor!" echoed the pastor. "I wish it *were* humor. The whole world has been depressing me for years. Why anybody wants to live is beyond me. If you could only see the panorama, Hoaks! Just once! Why, if we had any kind of civilization at all that guard's cravat would drive any decent man to suicide. The trouble is that you have succumbed to the animal impulse to live without consideration of the penalties nature imposes on existence.

"Humor!" the minister repeated again, with increasing bitterness. "Your guards are getting that! Here you are doing exactly what these fat seals have hoped and prayed and watched for ever since your trial. Look at them grin at each other. Downstairs they're slapping each other on the back right now.

"Don't interrupt! I know what you are going to say—that you are dying and I'm not. But I've lived, and you haven't. I've spent fifty years trying to get something out of life, exploring all its strata, trying everything once. And after all, the only part of it I would be willing to endure again is that part in which I have slept. I still have money, and memories, but I would surrender everything for the chance to be in your shoes tonight and tomorrow morning."

Hoaks looked bewildered. The Rev. Mr. Parker continued in a vehement undertone:

"I mean it. So help me God, I mean it. I haven't the courage to kill myself or I would have blown out my brains like a gentleman years ago. I've tried to—tried everything—poison, the Woolworth building, the river—but my nerve flops at the last second. Other people have all the luck. Here you are, having it done for you."

The clergyman's conviction was evident. His sincerity was infectious. Hoaks hung on his speech.

Ghostly counsel flowed like oil. The Rev. Mr. Parker talked for five hours without stopping. He spoke of the great men of all time, how they lived, and with what great joy they laid down their lives at last. Hoaks' confidence increased. The guards, out of earshot, looked at each other portentously, convinced that a miracle was being wrought before their eyes.

When the Rev. Mr. Parker had done, his waxy face was sufficiently spiritual to have merited his sanctification. He signaled Hoaks, and both knelt as in prayer.

"This is the hokum," he whispered. "If the old women around here knew what I've been telling you, I'd be tarred and feathered by morning. But you hold to what I've told you and you make them sick."

"I will," exclaimed Hoaks fervently, grasping the minister's hand. "I can't tell you what it feels like to

meet someone like you. I owe you everything."

"Don't mention it."

IV

AFTER the Rev. Mr. Parker had left, Hoaks regained all of his old-time poise, plus an assurance that was incomprehensible to his guards. He laid himself down on his cot, requesting them to awaken him one hour before the arrival of the sheriff, and slept peacefully until daybreak.

When the sheriff came Hoaks was smoking a cigar. He seemed animated, even happy. He joked with the jury of physicians who examine each condemned man to determine his physical condition before the state sees to it that his ailments need bother no one any more, least of all himself.

With the clergyman at his side he walked down the long corridor easily and with a springy tread. On the trap he shuffled his feet a little, like a circus acrobat about to make a perilous leap. He smiled tolerantly as he was bound and trussed up in the hideous barber's apron. They looped the noose about his neck and adjusted the cap. They asked him if he had anything to say.

Below were the upturned faces of the sheriff's friends, bootleggers, and next of kin; the professional bondsmen and physicians; their friends and bootleggers; members of the grand jury; newspapermen who synchronized their wrist watches with the obscenely new clock and remarked professionally to each other on the details of the hanging.

"Only this," said Hoaks in a clear voice that seemed to bound from end to end of the long whitewashed room. "The state is doing me a big favor. Everybody makes me sick. The sheriff with his fat belly and fat head; all you stewards who got drunk to witness this obscenity; you newspaper reporters taking notes down there; all of you. I'm glad to get rid

of you. Go ahead, Sheriff. Have your little joke."

The sheriff made a sign with his hand. An assistant pressed a button. The trap coughed and crashed. The sacked body of Hoaks shot through the open space, rebounded and became limp. Ten minutes later he was pronounced dead by strangulation.

V

FIFTEEN minutes later he was jouncing in a hearse from the rear entrance of the jail, while Cæsar, the prisoners' mangy mongrel, yipped at the wheel. Inside the vehicle a physician feverishly adjusted a pulmotor to the clay.

The hearse pitched like a three-ton hooker in an angry sea. The doctor damned in exasperation and fury as he was thrown from one side of the interior to the other. At length the rolling ceased, the doors were flung open, and the wicker basket was dragged violently out and bundled through an areaway into a basement room. The doctor with his apparatus leaped after it.

Two volunteer pallbearers, one the driver, rolled the limp form to the top of an operating table. Wires and contacts were hastily adjusted to the wrists, head and limbs. A man in white jabbed a hypodermic into the arm of the corpse. Another pulled a switch in the wall.

Long blue flashes sputtered from the contacts. The crew cursed and chafed the blue limbs in a fever of excitement.

Presently there was a flutter of the eyelids. The resurrection men worked at white heat. The lips moved, the man sighed, and presently Hoaks lived again.

VI

"WHAT'S the matter?" he asked.

His throat hurt and the words came with extreme difficulty.

"Be quiet!" ordered one of the physicians. "Lie back and rest."

As he sank back his saviors whirled their white aprons like dervishes in a roistering ceremony of self-applause. Hoaks marveled silently without turning his head.

"How do you feel now?" asked one of the physicians, disengaging himself from the jubilee.

"Rotten!" said Hoaks. "What's happened?"

"We brought you back to life."

"What for?"

"To prove it could be done. It's the greatest thing that ever happened. But take it easy now and thank us later."

"Wait a minute!" said Hoaks. "Who asked you to bring me back?"

"Nobody. What difference does it make to you?"

"Let him alone, doctor," interrupted one of the others. "He's still off his nut from shock."

"Who asked you to stick your oar into this?" demanded Hoaks. "What's the idea, anyway? Who put you up to this?"

"Sh-h-h-h," warned a doctor.

"Sh-h-h-h! nothing. I won't sh-h-h-h! I've got a right to know something about this!"

"Please be quiet," insisted the first doctor. "There are people upstairs. If they hear you it will be all over with you and us, too. It's just as I told you. We perfected an apparatus for the resuscitation of the dead. You were the first person we could conveniently work it out on. Now if you are sensible you will lie down and keep quiet. Everybody thinks you are dead, even the undertaker we hired for your funeral. But if you keep on yelling you are going to spoil it all."

"I don't care," shouted Hoaks. "You smart Alecks can't put anything over on me! What do I care what happens to you? I would have died happy if you hadn't horned into this. Now what am I going to do? I can

hardly breathe. I feel like I'd been hit with an office building. I ought to punch you on the nose!"

The doctors looked at each other blankly.

"Come on, now!" bawled Hoaks. "Let me out of here. Do you hear? Where is this place?"

"Stop!" shouted the doctors. "Are you crazy?"

But before they could intercept him, Hoaks had rolled from the table and jerked open the door.

"Go to hell!" he shouted, and slammed it behind him.

VII

HOAKS knew the city and had occasion to know the county jail. It took him twenty minutes, half-running, half-walking, to reach the gray stone pile that sprouted from the huddled tenements of the business district's fringe. Pedestrians stared pop-eyed at his maniacal glare and at the livid rope burn under his chin, but he was too full of his big idea to take account of the attention he attracted.

At the jail he banged noisily on the door. Through the grating he could see the sheriff in conversation with the state's attorney and a group of belated spectators of the hanging.

The sheriff was apologizing because Hoaks' neck had not been broken, as planned. The rope, he said, had been too short, and he found occasion to introduce his favorite theory of long ropes for short hangings. This was being opposed by a deputy whose argument was that long ropes are apt to break.

"Beg pardon, Sheriff," interrupted the turnkey. "But there's some kind of a nut outside that wants to see you."

"What's his name?"

"That's the funny part of it. He says he's Hoaks."

Everyone laughed, the sheriff most of all. Nevertheless, he went to the door and peered through the grating.

"If it aint him it's his twin," he exclaimed after a startled look. "Bring him in here."

The door swung to. Hoaks was hustled inside.

"I'll be damned if he ain't a ringer for him," bellowed the sheriff, standing at arm's length and surveying his visitor. "Did you ever see anything like it? Turn around there, you. Let's have a look at your neck. For God's sake, look at that burn! Is this a joke?"

"That's what I want to know," said Hoaks.

"That's him," gibbered a guard, his eyes popping from his head. He wagged his finger at Hoaks and opened and shut his mouth several times before he could finish:

"Look at his suit. Look at his shoes. It's the same ones he wore when he went out in the basket."

"Of course they are," said Hoaks. "What's the matter with all you fellows?"

The group backed away and left him standing alone in the middle of a safe semi-circle.

"Why ain't he at the undertaker's?" chattered the sheriff.

"I was," offered Hoaks. "Some damned fool brought me to."

"Oh," said the sheriff, perceiving the miracle with instant relief. "So *that's* it, is it?"

For the next ten minutes questions rattled on like machine guns. Reporters ran to telephones and back again. Photographers came and exploded flashlights that sounded like cannon. The sheriff, holding Hoaks by the coat-sleeve, finally forced his way into the jailer's private office, sent for the state's attorney and locked the door.

"Now, Hoaks," he began, when the three were alone, "what was the big idea in coming back here?"

"What do you think it was?" retorted Hoaks, reproachfully, "I want to be hanged without any more of this monkey business."

"That drop must have jarred your

bean a bit. You had different ideas last night."

"Well, I have different ideas now."

"Well, this is a new one on me," said the sheriff with a helpless gesture. "Now I've got to requisition for some more rope. The alderman took yours for a souvenir. I'd buy some more but the damn county never kicks in a cent for anything that can be requisitioned. And that'll take a week, at least," he added, dismally.

"You can't hang him at all, Sheriff," interposed the state's attorney.

"Why not?" the sheriff and Hoaks demanded at once.

"Because it's against the law. No man may be placed in jeopardy of his life twice for the same crime. In the eyes of the law this man is dead. A coroner's jury decided that. As far as I can find out, he *was* dead. Better lock him up."

"How can I lock him up?" protested the sheriff. "I've got to have commitment papers for him. Where am I going to get them?"

"Then turn him loose. My guess is you'll have to, anyway."

"Well, that's a fine note," complained Hoaks bitterly. "You're a couple of fine public officials. Use your common sense. I was sentenced to hang, and I am alive. Now it's up to you to kill me."

"But how can we?" asked the state's attorney. "You're a different person. You're John Doe. Hoaks is dead and John Doe hasn't killed anybody."

"I killed Cooper."

"No you didn't. Hoaks killed Cooper. You never killed anybody."

No one spoke for an appreciable moment. Then Hoaks seemed to remember something:

"I want to talk this over with somebody. Do you know where I can get in touch with Mr. Parker, the minister?"

The sheriff summoned a deputy.

"Take this man over to see the

Reverend Parker," he commanded. "Take him out the back way and bring him back in half an hour. We may be able to get somewhere by that time, although as far as I can see he's a free man."

VIII

THE nerveless Mr. Parker's pallid face turned blue when he answered his doorbell. Even Hoaks' explanation of his presence on earth could not restore his poise. He stood and stared until Hoaks touched his sleeve and begged a moment's conversation with him in private.

The deputy looked dubiously at the minister, who nodded his head.

"It's all right, Kropke. I'll answer for him."

The two passed into the study.

"This looks like the plan of Providence," Hoaks was saying as they closed the door and sat down.

The Rev. Mr. Parker merely gaped.

"Do you know what I mean?" pursued Hoaks.

"I suppose you mean that you are still with us."

"Not that. I am too much of a convert to your philosophy to mean that."

"Well, what do you mean?"

"Oh, I forgot to tell you. I've been to the jail. They refuse to hang me now."

"They do!"

"Yes. I'm legally dead, it appears."

"Oh, yes, yes."

"And the only way I can be hanged now is for another murder."

"Well?"

"Well, I just happened to think of what you told me last night in the death cell—I mean about your wanting to die, and not having the nerve. Do you see how both our problems are working out?"

"I confess I don't," said the minister, nervously clearing his throat.

Hoaks' face lighted with enthusiasm.

"You don't," he exclaimed. "Here—you want to die and are afraid to kill yourself. I'm in the same fix—"

"But—"

"Just a second. What's to stop me from killing you and then being hanged for your murder?"

"Wait—"

"I can do it right now, right here—" Hoaks looked quickly about him and caught sight of a bag of golf clubs standing near the door. "Here, one tap with a golf stick will fix it for us both."

The Rev. Mr. Parker jumped up and bolted for the door.

"No, I'll get it. You stay here," commanded Hoaks, intercepting him. He pushed the terrified clergyman back into a chair and made critical selection of a midiron. Parker, paralyzed, weakly held up an arm to ward off the blow.

Hoaks made a trial swing and replaced the club.

"I'm best with a niblick," he explained.

"Close your eyes," he added, noticing the Rev. Mr. Parker's abject horror. "You won't be so nervous."

"My God, man!" faltered Parker sinking to his knees. "Don't you know that what I told you was only a theory—that it was just to make the inevitable easy for you? You had to go—I tried to take the sting out of it. But it's different now—much different!"

Hoaks rested the golf club on the floor.

"You mean to say that you were stringing me?"

"Well, not stringing you exactly. What I told you may be the truth—probably is. But I'm not even a minister, man. I'm a stock promoter. It's just been my hobby to dress up and tell you fellows that sort of thing. I can't say I believe it myself, though."

"Well," said Hoaks, "I believe it, and I hate hypocrites."

The niblick described an arc that ended somewhere in Parker's dyed hair. He spilled forward. A small sigh escaped him. He turned slowly on his back and lay still.

Hoaks opened his shirt and felt his heart. It, too, was still.

He leaned on the golf stick in profound meditation.

There came a timid knock on the door and a woman's soprano:

"The sheriff wants to know if you are about through."

"In just a minute," replied Hoaks.

A puff of wind came through the open window and frolicked fantastically with the coat-tails of the corpse.

Hoaks hesitated. Then he tip-toed to the window, stealthily let himself out, and ran like a rabbit across the lawn.



Revolt

By A. Newberry Choyce

I LOVED you well, but now I walk more wise,
 Embittered by the bondage that I knew;
 Like a long-suffering kingdom I arise
 And war against the tyranny of you.

That sad tame slave you fettered is gone free,
 Wilder than little birds about your door;
 And now he shall deliver you the key
 To his heart's crimson fortresses no more.

For you are treason, treachery complete,
 Princess of perfidies cruel and rare.
 And you are inconsistent as a sweet
 Red rope of roses in a harlot's hair.



A GIRL walks along holding hands with a man. A woman takes him firmly under the arm.



THE careless man tells a woman he loves her. The cautious man tells her it is beautiful to love.



BIOGRAPHY—A chronicle written to preserve the memory of the biographer.



The Higher Learning in America

II Yale

By Donald Ogden Stewart

I

IT is narrated in the suppressed masterpiece of Mr. James Branch Cabell that the creation of Heaven was a divinely generous act of kindness toward the grandmother of Jurgen. "Now surely," said the Manager, or words to that effect, "if this quite nice old lady has such perfectly definite ideas as to what Heaven should be, it would perhaps be better not to disappoint her." And thus and so was created the Heaven of Jurgen's grandmother.

Reading books about Yale—or attending Yale dinners—I often get the impression that authors and speakers have yielded to the same kindly impulse; they seem only too obligingly desirous of creating a Yale according to the illusions of somebody's grandparent. One gets the feeling that life at Yale must consist largely in sitting on the old Yale fence singing old Yale songs. One somehow becomes convinced that because the symbol of old Eli is the bulldog, all Yale men thereby become chiefly endowed with a grim never-say-die spirit, which inevitably carries them to success in after life.

"The battle of Waterloo," said the Duke of Wellington, "was won on the football fields of Rugby"; "I have found," says the modest but successful president of the First National Bank, "that my success has been largely due to the lessons in life which I received

when me and my team-mates held Harvard for downs three times on our own one-yard line." (Applause.)

Quite possibly such a Yale once existed; at least, for one thing, Harvard was certainly held for downs more often in former days than now. And far be it from me to apply the short but ugly word to these loyal graduate novelists and after-dinner speakers; it is not at all my intention to give the bulldog a kick in the teeth. The bulldog is an eminently useful animal. As a drawing card, for instance, he has a far wider appeal to young prep. school men than, say, Henry Adams, as a creature whose characteristics are worthy of emulation. There is much to be said in his favor. But as a symbol of the Yale of today he is almost as much an anachronism as those stories in which the Yale half-back got through the entire Harvard team and was tapped for Bones. For the bulldog, no matter how admirable, how absolutely necessary certain of his qualities may be, has never been distinguished for his mentality; whereas the outstanding feature of the Yale of today is, I believe, the intellectual awakening of the students.

Education, in spite of what successful business men may say, involves a great deal more than the ability to answer Mr. Edison's questionnaire; a college offers something better than four years of delightful comradeship and the lessons of the football field; personality and poise are not the be-all

and the end-all of a university career, no matter how useful they may later become in selling Baltimore and Ohio convertible 4½'s. And Yale, to my mind, is showing distinct signs of "coming of age"—of transcending the commonly accepted idea of American college life. Yale is graduating men who, while they have enjoyed themselves immensely and have formed lasting friendships, have also acquired that faith in doubt and doubt in faith which is the beginning of education.

But any attempted description, any philosophical generalization of one's alma mater becomes, in the final analysis, a personal affair. My view of the Yale of 1916 as exhibited in this essay must necessarily differ in many respects from that of my classmates; it must presumably differ much more from the Yale as remembered by graduates of other years. The inevitable indignant alumnus, after reading this essay, may presumably cry, "Unfair! You give an untrue picture of Yale. You create an entirely wrong impression in the minds of outsiders. If Yale is like that I shall send my son to Princeton or (if he has read the *opera* of F. Scott Fitzgerald) to the Union Theological Seminary," etc., etc. Let him console himself with the thought that all "uncharacteristic" scenes may be attributed to my own personal impressions and not to any imperfections in the State of Yale.

Another essential point is that I speak largely of Yale "Academic." Of the collection of fraternity houses and engineering laboratories known as the Sheffield Scientific School I know little. "Sheff" and "Ac" do not mix; the aims, ideals and life of each are separate and distinct. The average Sheff undergraduate thinks of "Ac" as a place where hypocrites refrain from enjoying themselves under the fear of queering themselves for Bones; the "Ac" man conceives of "Shefftown" as a collection of country clubs. In both pictures there is a small amount of truth and a great deal of prejudice.

II

It would seem natural to start a description of Yale life with the opening night of Freshman year; as a matter of fact, any survey of the Yale scene must begin at least twelve months before, in order to comprehend the peculiar relation of the Eastern preparatory schools to the New Haven institution. The majority of the leaders in each Yale class come from Hotchkiss, Hill, Taft, Andover or Exeter, and those schools fit their men for Yale in a much broader sense than the mere preparation for the passing of the entrance examinations. For many years the "big men" in the school have gone down to New Haven and "made good"; in the course of time, and largely through the perfectly natural influence of hero worship, there has been developed in the prep. school a reflection of the college—a reflection which bears at times a curious resemblance to a skull and crossbones. Your school leader, when he enters Yale, has a pretty fair idea of what he wants and the way he intends to get it, and by doing so he is simply following the path laid out for him by school leaders of preceding generations.

At Exeter, for instance, I was elected editor of the school paper; preceding editors had gone to Yale and made Skull and Bones by way of the Yale "Daily News"; I went, in the ordinary course of events, to do likewise.

The case is not, of course, quite so simple as that. There were, in my decision to enter Yale, other factors: a beatific vision of a blue "Y" on a white sweater, for one; a visit of the Harvard "gym" team to Exeter for another. But my election to the editorship of the school paper set in motion the machinery; natural ambition did the rest; and a year later there was disgorged at New Haven a young man who, while he had not the slightest idea as to the purpose of college education, had a very definite idea as to what it was he had come to Yale for. And that purpose was the last thing in the world he would have admitted to anyone—especially himself.

I went to Yale, primarily, because I wanted to make Bones. There is nothing particularly reprehensible about that; nothing which reflects discredit upon Exeter, Yale, Bones or me. But it does seem unfortunate that that ambition, under the rather hypocritical guise of "working for Yale," found, in the over-organization of "extra curriculum" activities there, an outlet which almost completely obscured the real benefits of the college and postponed until Senior year the process of obtaining an education. Although it makes very little difference why a man goes to Yale, it seems to me extremely important that the college have ready for him some counter-irritant which shall correct certain youthful enthusiasms—a counter-irritant based on a definite ideal of the purpose and aims of education. The present arrangement of the Yale student machine as concerns its reception of the incoming Freshman works decidedly against such a corrective.

There is, first of all, the opening night "rush"—a picturesque torchlight parade of all four classes behind "Y"-sweatered athletes and a band blaring "March, March, On Down the Field"—a pushing, shoving mob on the Campus, gathered around a ring in which perspiring, waist-naked Sophomore and Freshman wrestle for the honor of their respective classes—an indiscriminate, blind scramble the length of the Campus after a push-ball, and, above all, an unmistakable thrill as you somewhat timidly join your four hundred or more classmates in the "brek-ek-ek-hex-co-ax" of your first Yale cheer.

And then, soon after "rush night," comes the Freshman reception, under the auspices of the Yale "Daily News." The keynote of this reception is "Get out and do something." Speeches are made by the athletic captains, the "News," "Lit," "Record," "Courant" chairmen, the president of the Christian Association, etc. You are urged to go out and "work for Yale"; great emphasis is laid on the fact that all may

find some form of activity suitable for them. But there is nobody who gets up and says: "Gentlemen of the Freshman class. You have before you four years of irresponsibility. You have, for perhaps the only time in your lives, the opportunity to sit back and think about things—religion, beauty, politics—in an abstract, disinterested way. You have at your command TIME, KNOWLEDGE and LEISURE. For God's sake, young gentlemen, loaf, dream and ripen intellectually—for tomorrow you enter the bond business."

Instead, you leave the reception more than ever determined to "make good"; you lie awake that night groaning because you stammered when the crew captain spoke to you, and vowing by all the gods to show those Sophomores that you have "got the stuff."

Incidentally, this paternal-judicial relation of one class to the class below it is a distinctive feature of Yale life, and is largely the result, as is the case with the majority of Yale student phenomena, of the fraternity system. It is the Sophomores who, in your imagination, have their eyes on you all through your Freshman year in order that they may know who to select for the Junior fraternities; it is this same class which will presumably be watching your own Sophomore and Junior years in order that they, as Seniors, may decide whether or not you are worthy of an election to a Senior Society. The system makes of each class a self-sufficient unit; each has its own particular dormitory or dormitories; inter-class friendships are rare, and almost invariably subject the underclassman to suspicion on the ground of "heeling."

The custom of living in dormitories, rather than in fraternity or private houses, is another feature which distinguishes Yale Academic from "Sheff" and many other universities; the result of this dormitory life is, I believe, the acquisition of a more natural, more widely diversified group of acquaintances than in those institutions where

one lives and eats in one's Fraternity house. This insistence, incidentally, that one live more or less indiscriminately with one's classmates in a not-over-luxurious dormitory is a rather typical example of the presence at Yale of that American spirit of "democracy," at one extreme of which lies a healthy disregard of "social" standing, at the other an over-zealous suppression of individualism. As regards this latter characteristic, however, I think that there are distinct signs that Yale is approaching by degrees the standard of individual freedom set by Harvard; certainly, thanks largely to the Elizabethan Club, the voice of the poet and the litterateur is no longer as of one crying in a wilderness of 100 per cent normalcy.

This Elizabethan Club has had a curiously significant growth in power since its inception about 1910. Through the generosity of one of the graduates, a beautiful old-fashioned residence was purchased at that time and furnished as a literary club. There are no dues; undergraduate and graduate members are elected from both "Ac" and "Sheff"; the average undergraduate number in any "Ac" class is at most fifteen; practically no Freshmen belong, and comparatively few "Sheff" men. It is almost the one place where one meets the faculty on common ground. Tea is served every afternoon after four; conversation—literary, philosophical, æsthetic or commonplace—can be, and is, indulged in at any hour of the day or night. Sims, the colored caretaker, lends dignity to the discussions and is a referee whose decisions are never disputed, especially as concerns Shakespearean questions, for Sims is more widely read in Elizabethan literature than the majority of the members. The Club, originally intended, possibly, as a shelter for the "queer birds" who read poetry in the days of Ted Coy, has gradually assumed a well-recognized and respected position as one of the most effective agents in the intellectual awakening of the under-

graduate. Whether the Elizabethan Club has affected the college—or whether the reverse is the case—the fact remains that there is at present in Yale an interest in things literary, and especially in the creation of poetry, that has swept the Club and its members into a position of unquestionable undergraduate authority.

After the Freshman's first groping week of self-conscious attempts to locate himself and his class rooms, after the sounding of trumpets and the waving of blue flags, and before the beginning of one's particular extra-curriculum competition, life settles down to a routine of lessons, movies and Saturday football games. One discovers to one's sorrow that most of the Freshman studies are very little different from one's prep. school lessons; it is a shock to learn that the boring prep. school "mental training" is to be continued through the first half, at least, of one's college course. One had been specifically told by an annually lachrymose head-master on graduating from prep. school that one was now a "young man"; one consequently rebels at the tendency on the part of the college authorities to treat one as a school-boy.

There are, however, in those first weeks of Freshman year, before the business of "making good" has begun, glimpses of another Yale—the Yale of careless nonchalance, of glorious drinking parties, of excited discussions about religion, the divinity of Christ, monogamy—fleeting pictures of awakening curiosity perpetually interrupted by the encroaching vision of extra-curriculum competition—lovely arpeggio passages all too often drowned out by the blatant blare of calling trumpets.

For in the mind of a Freshman lie the seeds of the awakening of that intellectual curiosity which is the beginning of wisdom—curiosity about Mohammed, about socialism, about Ibsen, about sex—and all too often is this mental age of puberty postponed in the interests of success in undergraduate

activities until Senior year or, in many cases, indefinitely. After all, it is along about three a. m. when Tom, stein in hand and eyes popping, says, "This fellow Christ has ruined civilization," that the mind of youth begins to stir and there appears before him, if faintly, a glimmer of the possibilities inherent in a philosophical and æsthetic survey of the Divine Comedy in which he is to take a part. And all too often is this vision suddenly cut off by an all too blue curtain.

The "Christer," incidentally, has been, I believe, receiving increasingly rough treatment at the hands of Yale undergraduates—a rather healthy sign, in my mind, of intellectual and bona fide spiritual awakening. The days when it was possible for the football captain to stand up in the Christian Association and tell open-mouthed Freshmen all about God and St. Paul seem to be passing; the result will probably be more pseudo-Nietzscheans, but also more real Christians. I think that the present profound distrust of the "Christer" at Yale is an encouraging sign, as is, certainly, the growing tendency to laugh down those visiting Billy Sundays whose success is measured by the number of scared Freshmen who come to confess about their sins.

It must not be understood, however, that the average daily life—mental or otherwise—of a Yale Freshman is particularly concerned with the problems of this world, or the next. A pretty fair average day would start with a frantic rush to get to chapel on time, especially if one's remaining allowance of "cuts" is near the danger point. In chapel one dozes or studies, depending upon whether or not one has a class immediately after divine service.

Following chapel one joins the close-packed mob in the post office, struggling for mail and the "Daily News"; one searches the last page of the latter eagerly and is perhaps rewarded with the announcement: "Latin A—Mr. Smith will not meet his 8.30 class today." Then to breakfast at Longley's—"scrambled with toasted bun" on an

arm-chair, and a slow reading of the "News" and a New York paper. Back to one's room and an hour of study, happily interrupted by the always interesting "Rosey"—tailor, raconteur and disseminator of "dope" par excellence—and perhaps also by a fishy gentleman who wants to practically *give* you a complete set of Balzac and de Maupassant with rare bindings and rarer illustrations, together with a year's subscription to the *Cosmopolitan Magazine*. Then across the Campus to Osborn Hall, where for an hour you listen to the despairing efforts of a hopeful young history instructor to elicit information concerning the Reformation from fifty bored students. Outside for a smoke, and back to German, made endurable by the fact that the professor is blind and cannot see beyond the first row, resulting in perfect recitations from every student and a general exodus from the last three rows long before the end of the hour.

At 11.30 comes Chemistry—delightful subject—in which the professor, having manufactured a deadly gas, disappoints his class utterly by failing to inhale it. Then to your "eating joint" for lunch, where for an hour you "kid" the other ten men at your table about their prep. school, their Latin recitation, their red necktie. There is generally one class in the afternoon—possibly English, made fascinating by a sarcastic professor and irritatingly giving a glimpse of what other recitations might be. The rest of the afternoon is devoted to your particular extra-curriculum activity—football, crew, the "News"—or, if you have none, you loaf around somebody's room or play squash in the gym. Dinner at the "eating joint" is a repetition of the noon kidding, story telling, etc.; after dinner you join a party going down to the "Bij," or the Globe, depending upon which of the two you have not already visited during the past three days. Thence to your room, an hour or more of study, punctuated by a discussion of the chances for the Princeton game and the enthralling dropping of water

bags on unfortunate pedestrians. And so to bed.

III

ALTHOUGH primarily a view of the life of a Freshman, there is much about the preceding picture that remains characteristic of the succeeding three years. The studies, however, grow increasingly attractive; the extra-curriculum activities more engrossing; the trips to the movies less frequent. Social life, as regards the other sex, occupies in most cases a small part of your time. Occasional dances at the Lawn Club; occasional New Haven calls. You rarely go to New York; a constant week and exodus, as well as the possession of an automobile or too frequent haunting of the Taft Hotel grill, is considered an alarming sign of moral degradation in the younger generation, and a knife thrust in the bulldog's heart. There is much to be said for this traditional insistence on a certain standard of simplicity of life.

Incidentally, the moral attitude toward the sin of sexual incontinence is one of the most deep-rooted convictions of the college. The Yale man will "pet" (or "neck," as he calls it) on almost every possible occasion; but there he draws a complete and distinct line across which he rarely steps and, once committed, the sin is never by any chance paraded before the inevitable judgment of a more or less solid public opinion.

This picture of the average Yale life exhibits, I believe, with the possible exception of the sex taboo, most of the characteristics of American college life—notably an almost complete indifference to classroom work and a delightful, carefree camaraderie, with occasional—all too occasional—moments of serious discussion. Although not by any means an ideal educational scene, it has the possibilities of intellectual awakening in succeeding years. But Yale, reflecting perhaps more intensely than any other college the spirit of American life, says: "You must *do*

something; you must earn the respect and admiration of other men in some material way; you must win some honor or badge of merit. Idle discussion is valueless; the man of action is the man who succeeds." And your Yale man, hearing the call of ambition, cannot loaf gracefully; the world is too much with him, late and soon; he is too busy winding the phonograph to hear the Beethoven record.

No matter what form of activity he chooses, there is this same devilish seriousness, this same all-consuming intensity. It makes men much more anxious about winning their "Y" than enjoying the sport for its own sake; it sets a premium on personal success far out of proportion to its real value. My memory of Freshman football is a succession of dreary car rides from the gymnasium to the field, with occasional high moments of play and many low periods of loathing. Freshmen crew returns to me as endless afternoons on the rowing machines in the gym, followed by grim panting jogs around an interminable cemetery. I do not argue against the fact that it was probably good for me to take my beatings on the football field; I suppose the crew developed my guts as well as my muscle; but both football and crew are presumably sports, whereas at Yale they have become a serious business, and, like matrimony, not lightly to be entered into.

An excellent example of this perversion of the educational ideal is a competition for the editorial board of the Yale "Daily News." Three of these "comps," lasting two months each, are provided for each class. You rent a bicycle, say good-bye to your comrades, and for eight or more weeks you work harder than you have ever worked or probably ever will work in your life. You neglect studies, friends, health; you race hectically around the college collecting news items, interviewing visiting celebrities, running errands. At the request of the editors you sign a pledge to be in bed after twelve every night; this you circumvent by working

in pajamas until two and three in the morning with your light suspended over your bed. At the end of the competition the two or three who are elected proceed to get very drunk; the others prepare for the next competition; the wheels move on. With the aid of much tutoring you are generally able to make up the class-room work you have neglected.

In the fall of Sophomore year comes the reward to those who have labored faithfully "for Yale" as Freshmen, for in November the Juniors select the Sophomores for each of the five Junior fraternities—Alpha Delta Phi, Delta Kappa Epsilon, Psi Upsilon, Zeta Psi, and Beta Theta Pi. The night of election is preceded by two curious weeks of "calling," which is the Yale co-efficient of "rushing." Inasmuch as no one but members are admitted to the fraternity houses, this "calling," for the purpose of looking over prospective material, takes place in the various candidates' rooms. The "callers" are committees of from three to fifteen members of the various fraternities; the "callee" is the Sophomore who happens to be under consideration by the fraternity in question. You and your room-mate sit nervously in your room pretending to study; a knock on the door. Enter ten members of Psi U. You swallow hard, try to appear at ease, and light the wrong end of a cork tip cigarette; your room-mate forgetfully offers the broken chair to one of the visitors; he crashes to the floor; the rest laugh. Finally they go and you curse your room-mate heartily. Another knock; enter three members of D.K.E., wearing derbies. This is the campaign committee—the ultimate factor in letting candidates know that they are under serious consideration. One of the committee was in your fraternity at Exeter; you greet him cordially—not too cordially—and converse with the others much in the manner of a bride trying to make a good impression on her husband's relatives. On the first night of "calling" practically everybody in the Sophomore class receives a visit; on the

last night only those men who are desired by the fraternity and a few on the "substitute" list.

Election night—the culmination of the "calling" season—is tremendously exciting. After supper you find gathered outside your door some seven or eight members of each fraternity that wishes to elect you or your room-mate. Promptly at seven a gun is fired on the Campus; one of the "Zet" campaign committee rushes breathless into your room, shouting to your room-mate, "Will you accept an election to Zeti Psi?" Cries outside your door of "Wait for 'Deke'—wait for Psi U—take 'Zet'." Your room-mate gulps and shakes his head—cheers and groans without. Cries of "Bill Waters threw 'Zet'!" A breathless wait. Then up the stairs you hear rushing footsteps—two derbied men push through the crowd in an effort to reach your room first. Frantic cheers—they burst in together. A wild-eyed "Deke" rushes at your room-mate shouting "Hold off for 'Deke'!" At the same time the other shouts, "Wait for Psi U!"—pandemonium—your room-mate grabs the "Deke's" proffered hand—cheers—the Psi U turns to you and offers an election—you shake your head and the crowd of "Dekes" exults, "two throw downs for Psi U!" The Psi U rushes out—the "Deke" campaign committee man turns to you and says "Hold off for ——" "Yes," you shout—loud cheers—the room is filled with jubilant members of Delta Kappa Epsilon trying to shake your hand—you and your room-mate hurry down to the Campus to learn the results of the other elections—you are proud and happy and excited and relieved.

Fraternity elections, with the resultant ceremonies of initiation, start Sophomore year off in a blaze of conviviality and good fellowship which lasts throughout most of the year. The "first ten" for each fraternity quickly elect the "second ten" from their own class; shortly thereafter follows a week of "running," concluded by the formal initiation.

I think, incidentally, that this Junior fraternity system is ideal; no one at Yale takes fraternities very seriously and the result is a "club" to which one feels no particularly intense allegiance after the first month or so. A fairly large majority of the class is eventually elected to one of the five fraternities and the overshadowing importance of the Senior Societies—Skull and Bones, Scroll and Key, Wolf's Head, and the Elihu Club—gives to one's life in the Junior fraternities a delightfully disinterested character. It is rather difficult for members of "frats" in other colleges to understand this Yale lack of loyalty to one's "crowd"; but it should be considered that in other colleges, unlike Yale, one is generally elected in Freshman year, before more or less natural friendships have been formed, one lives and eats in the fraternity house, and one is thrown constantly with the members of one's own fraternity—all of which tends greatly to stimulate the feeling of group loyalty.

In Freshman year I had been too busy to drink or make friends; in Sophomore year the sudden discovery, through fraternity elections, of so many "awfully nice fellows" in my class almost resulted in delirium tremens. Mental development, checked by the competition in Freshman year for the "News," was utterly devastated in Sophomore year by the process of becoming "popular." But it was, on the whole, a delightful, if profitless, year—a year of resting on one's laurels, with music by the Hof-Bräu choir. At the end of the year I had become a "regular" fellow—I had acquired all the endearing young charms of a popular congressman—and I had drunk an enormous amount of ale.

IV

At this point I should like to express a grave doubt concerning the beneficent effect of Prohibition on our colleges. It seems to me that the present visible result—i. e., the substitution of whiskey for beer as a college drink, the

replacement of the stein on the table by the flask on the hip—can only work intense harm, and at New Haven, where there was already too much of a tendency to eliminate the "social glass" in the struggle for "success," the complete disappearance of the drinking club may possibly result in the intensification of that struggle—which may God forbid. The Yale student needs more undignified intoxication, more careless inebriation, more beer—anything to make him less intensely serious about life. And for that reason he does not need Prohibition—a hundred thousand workingmen who-now-have-money-in-a-bank-instead-of-beating-their-wives to the contrary.

Of course the following scene is hardly offered as conclusive data in support of the foregoing contention, but rather as an example of the happy unexpectedness of Sophomore life.

The place is a Sophomore room in Durfee Hall at one end of the Campus; the time is ten on a winter's evening; two room-mates are studying before a smouldering log in the fireplace, Ted in the Mission arm-chair, Bill at the Mission desk. A knock—enter Walt, also Sophomore, blowing his nose.

Walt: What are you doing, men of Yale?

Ted: This damn French—old Pink Whiskers gave us eight pages. Sit down.

Walt: Can't. I'm going to bed. Got a cold.

Bill: A cold? Say Walt, listen—I know just what you need. Hot Scotch and water.

Walt: No kidding?

Bill: Sure. Cure any cold.

Walt: Come on over to Mory's with me then while I take the cure.

Bill: Well—we'll have to come right back. I've got about four pages of Chaucer to read yet.

Walt: Oh, sure. I'll drink the Scotch and then hurry home to bed. Come on, Ted.

Ted: Gosh, I oughtn't to—(after a pause) well, I can do my French in chapel, maybe.

Walt: We're coming right back anyway.

They go out, leaving all the lights burning.

Three hours pass.

The sound of singing is heard outside—"In the Evening—by the Moonlight,"—three voices in three different keys. Unsteady footsteps on the stairs. The door opens. Enter Ted, Bill and Walt, arm in arm.

Ted: Let's sing s'more (sings): "In the evening—

Walt: No—let's sing Deke song 'bout
"Jolly old D. K. E."—

Bill (*sings*): "Psi U, my"—

Walt: Say, it's awful hot in here—guess
I'll take off my pants.

Ted: Trousers.

Walt: Pants. Chaucer says pants.

Bill: Where?

Walt: Page—page 3720—Stuyvesant 3720
—name's Helen Frick—Good girl—(*after a
pause*) not a great girl—but a good girl.

Bill: Don't take off all your clothes, you
iron-head.

Walt: Sure—hot in here. Gotta break up
cold.

Ted: Tell you what, Walt—let's you and
I—you and me—you and—let's run race.

Walt: Sure; 'round Campus.

Bill: Come here, you damn fools, and put
on your clothes. You'll catch more cold.

Walt: Sure; gotta break up cold.

Ted: Wait a minute, Walt, till I get these
B. V. D.'s off.

Bill: You two idiots.

*Walt and Ted, stark naked, run down the
stairs and out onto the snowy Campus. With
a whoop Ted starts, followed by Walt. Past
Wright Hall, the Freshman Dormitory, they
sprint—past Dwight Hall, the Christian As-
sociation and the hideous library buildings.
At the Art School Walt catches Ted; neck
and neck they turn past Vanderbilt, the
Senior's Gothic hall, and Osborne, the toad-
like recitation building. Then Walt begins to
give out, and by the time they are past the
"Three Weird Sisters"—Welch, Lawrence
and Farnam dormitories—Ted is far in the
lead but weakening rapidly. He stops in front
of the chapel to await the reeling Walt. Arm
in arm they pass into their entry of Durfee
as the chapel chimes announce the hour of
one. They stagger up the stairs, Ted moan-
ing "Look out—I'm sick," Walt murmuring
feebly "Gotta—break—cold."*

V

JUNIOR year it notable, first of all,
for the greater appeal from the class
and lecture-room; one leaves Latin,
elementary economics and modern lan-
guages to delve into psychology, anthro-
pology, philosophy; one comes under
the influence of the personality of be-
loved "Billy" Phelps and acquires a
taste for Browning and poetry. One
feels stirring within one those eager
gropings of early Freshman year before
one "made good." But once again the
curse of over-organized extra-curricu-
lum falls with a heavy hand, for in
Junior year one comes into possession

of those responsibilities for which one
had competed as a Freshman.

In this year, for example, the control
of the "News" passes into the hand of
our Board; the leisurely irresponsibility
of Sophomore year is over. The non-
college man who thinks that universities
are places where rich young fools have
four years of fun is misinformed; in
my five years of business life since grad-
uation I do not think I have ever worked
as hard, or had to use as much real
brain work and originality, as I did
when competing for, and as an editor
of, the "News." And the general suc-
cess of Yale men in the world—their
ready, confident acceptance of responsi-
bility anywhere—is no doubt largely
due to their training in extra-curricu-
lum activities. A football captain—a
"News" chairman—has had upon his
shoulders greater relative responsibility
than comes to most men after twenty
years in the world: the work of pub-
lishing the eight or ten sheets of the
Yale "Daily News" is unquestionably
invaluable to the editors in after life;
but I have ever-increasing doubts as to
the justification for the exaggerated
prominence of this and many other ac-
tivities in an educational institution—
especially if "education" is to be taken
to mean anything more than the prepa-
ration for business success.

After the mid-year examinations in
February comes the Junior promenade
—the "Social Event" of the season. To
prepare for the Prom. properly it is
best to begin training early in January.
Heavy work in the gym with chest
weights and dumb-bells, followed by
long cross-country runs, will gradually
harden the muscles for the intensive
three days of Prom. dancing. The
workouts should gradually be increased
in severity until Saturday of the week
preceding the festivities, when training
may stop. On this day it would be well
to sell all one's clothing, furniture,
books and jewelry in order to meet the
preliminary expenses. On Sunday your
girl will arrive, and promptly at mid-
night the dancing will start. Three days
later, having seen her to the noon train,

you will stagger back to your bed and when you again open your eyes it will be late afternoon of the next day.

Slowly, when your mind once more begins to function, in a delicious haze of romantic memory you will reconstruct the vision of those three delirious days. The afternoon tea dances, you in cutaway, your girl laughing happily as "stag" after "stag" "cuts in"—your delight that she is "getting by"—the dinner at Mory's, with the "Whiffenpoofs" leading the singing and the girls joining in—the walk, arm in arm, through the evening Campus, with the lights in the dormitory windows and the moon over the towers of Vanderbilt—the Sheff fraternity Germans—wild, ecstatic rhythm by New York orchestras—five in the morning, with Markell and a little white-haired violinist leading his orchestra around the room followed by a line of wild-eyed chanting "stags"—delirious soul wrenching syncopation—jazz gone crazy—then six a. m., and scrambled eggs and low sweet singing around the fireplace of some Sheff fraternity house living-room, with the dead-eyed chaperones trying to keep awake and the thrill of the quiet holding of your girl's hand—the Prom. itself—a whirling mass of changing, shifting color, with the 2nd Regiment Band on one side of the hall and Eddie Wittstein's orchestra on the other—the roll of drums, the clashing of cymbals, the wailing of ecstatic violins—one girl limping in tears from the floor, unable to move her exhausted feet further—Lew Jennings "stuck" for three hours with his roommate's sister—the joy of the last dance and the feel of the perfect rhythm of your girl's dancing—the quiet walk back to the Taft in broad daylight, through the streets of New Haven, with factory hands on their way to work gazing in amazement at the spectacle of a silk hat at seven a. m.—the kiss of youth and romance—the fragrance of her hair—the touch of her lips—one more kiss—the Prom. is over.

And then, on a certain Thursday in May, comes Tap Day, the spectacular selection by each of the four Senior so-

cieties of fifteen Juniors, an event which, in the limited sphere of the college world, seems, to the really small minority of the class concerned, a matter of life or death importance.

During the preceding months there has been noticeable among the class leaders a gradually heightening state of tension. "Dope" flies thick and fast; lists are made and re-made and compared with the "official list" of the suitpressing "Roseys" who, from many years' intensive study of Tap Day selections, have developed an almost uncanny technique in picking winners.

This state of nervous tension comes to a head on the night before Tap Day when each Junior fraternity holds a farewell dinner to which Junior members only are admitted. On this occasion the nerve-wracked "possibility" proceeds to relieve the strain by consuming as much alcohol as the human system will hold (and quite often a great deal more). The result is a gloriously uproarious party in which Keys possibilities slap Bones prospectives hilariously on the back and all roll off to observe the time-honored custom of breaking into the other four fraternity houses.

One doesn't eat much the next day. Breakfast is omitted because of the preceding evening's diversion; at lunch one somehow isn't hungry. The afternoon drags interminably. You stick pathetically close to your friends. You crack feeble jokes. You go to the movies and find on emerging that you have not the slightest idea of what you have seen.

A quarter of five. You slowly drift toward the Campus, hatless for the first time; it is the Senior's privilege to go without head covering—a privilege which begins on Tap Day of his Junior year. A Freshman "News" heeler runs up, embarrassed, to wish you good luck.

On the Campus you find already half your class gathered, shifting restlessly, smoking incessantly and continuously throwing away half cigarettes. The windows of Wright and Durfee are filled with excited Freshmen and Sopho-

mores; only Juniors and a few Seniors are on the Campus.

Five o'clock. At the first stroke of the chapel chimes—Slap! "Go to your room"—a cheer. You are glad Ed has gone. Keys and you wait. You wait a hell of a long while. Everywhere around you men are being tapped. You try to look unconcerned; your knees wobble and you light your fifteenth cigarette.

Near you stands Phillips—a "queer bird" poet in your class who has consistently for three years mocked the canons of correct Yale thought. He walks up to you and says, "I hope to God you get it." There is something about Phillips' nonchalant independence that you have always liked and, perhaps, envied; from time to time you have condescendingly patronized him and even tried to get him into your fraternity. Poor old Phillips—damn nice of him to wish you luck; too bad he is such a queer one.

A Bones man is seen pushing through the crowd. Phillips clears the way for him and points to you. "There he is!" he shouts. You look down at the ground—expectantly; the Bones man starts toward you. Suddenly you hear a loud resounding whack, followed by an obscene exclamation in Phillips' voice. The force of the blow drives him into your arms; you catch him—bewildered. Phillips tapped for Bones—Phillips, the iconoclast, the scoffer, the poet! He staggers off and you stand there, dazed. A moment later something hits you on the back and you, too, start for your room, too overcome by the surprise of Phillips' election to feel any emotion over your own. As you push through the crowd you hear Rosey crying, "My God, boys, if I'd known about Phillips, I could have cleaned up a thousand dollars—a thousand dollars!"

The quest, begun in prep. school, is successfully terminated; you have received the mark of approval, the badge of success; you have "made good."

But so has Phillips.

And right there, in that dramatic event which I have set down exactly as

it occurred on my own Tap Day, I see one solution to the problem of the over-organization of Yale extra-curriculum activities. It is partially correct to attribute much of the blame for that over-organization to the exaggerated importance given the Senior society system of suspended rewards; it is, however, a dangerous meddling with complex and little understood machinery to jump to the conclusion that the solution lies in the abolition of the societies. The present system is the unplanned result of many years' slow growth in which the interests of Yale have always been the prime consideration; the indications are that the societies themselves are already applying the corrective to the present ill in the shifting of their standards for "successful" men.

This essay is, furthermore, grossly unfair to the Senior societies in the following respect: I have shown the effect of the more or less false tradition which has grown up in the undergraduates' mind concerning these institutions; I am not able to show the other side of the picture. It is as though a Catholic priest, having described the terrifying effect of an imposing cathedral upon him as a boy, were suddenly to stop before he had testified as to what the Church had come to mean to him after ordination. I do not think, in my own case at least, that the analogy is a bad one.

VI

TAP DAY winds up the third year; the scene changes to the following winter. It is a classroom in which are seated a hundred men. On the platform sits Chauncey Tinker—professor of English literature. He is coming to the conclusion of his lecture on Tristram Shandy. His voice trails off into silence; he stops. The lecture is over; he picks up his books and starts for the door. The class sits motionless. Suddenly the spell is broken. Someone in the back row begins to applaud; the rest take it up. A cheer is

started and in an instant swells into a roar. "Tink," embarrassed, fumbles at the door; it finally opens and he passes out. The cheering dies down only when he is long out of sight.

I think that in Senior year we approach our vision of a true university; I think that then, if ever, the process of education is allowed to take its natural course. The undergraduate is free, finally, of all extra-curriculum ambition—the cares of state, the duties of office have dropped from his shoulders—and he stands ready at last to drink of the spring that is Yale. He finds then the most inspiring of professors—the most brilliant of lectures—the most interesting of courses. He has, above all, leisure — leisure to think, leisure to dream—leisure, the *sine qua non* of all cultural development. He discovers the library and the New Haven Symphony

Orchestra. His mind, free at last, soars — and in its flight glimpses the tragedy, irony, beauty, grandeur of the world. And on the heights of nonchalance and egotism he places his thumb to his nose and in the direction of Henry Ford he wiggles four derisive fingers.

The final scene returns to the Campus in June. It is midnight; on the fence before the hall where once lived Nathan Hale sit Ted and Walt and Bill. A few lights burn in the Campus windows; three old grads pass, linked arm in arm; the Chapel clock chimes out the quarter hour. The men sit there in silence and by their wordless sitting thus upon their final college night they speak, far more than can be ever written down, the love and power of that which men cannot describe save by the symbol—Yale.

(The third article in this series—Columbia—by Sarah Addington, will appear in the next number of THE SMART SET.)



Petits Morceaux de Rien

By H. W. Hanemann

I

Billet d'Amour

A snowflake
Comes from the sky,
Lost in the whirling atoms—
And with a cool, sure touch,
Rests on my lips. . . .

II

Petit Désir

Would that you were a flower
That I might take you in my two hands,
Cupped,
And crush you to my lips.

The Three Kings

By William Caine

I

THE Munitions King threw his cigar-butt into the fire.

"Now, you two slugs," he said, "it's an hour and a half till dinner, and I'm going to take you for a tramp. If you sit frousting here you'll have no appetite, and there's a sucking-pig on the bill of fare. Come on. Up you get, Nappy. Out of that chair with you, Julius."

The Newspaper King rose reluctantly.

"If you'd had as much fresh air, Alec," he said, "as we've had today, motoring down here, perhaps you'd be willing to froust for an hour or so by a cozy fire like this. But it's no go, Julius, my lad. When Alec takes that tone of voice he means it, and we may as well give in now as later. It's out into the night for us, so up with you."

The Beer King obeyed.

"The sucking-pig's done it," he said. "It's a crime not to have an appetite when there's sucking-pig for dinner. All the same, it'll be precious cold out there."

"I should say so," said the Munitions King cheerfully. "Freezing hard. Just the weather for Christmas Eve. When you get back, Julius, you'll have a twist that'll surprise you. Come on."

They got their golf-cloaks and caps and left the house. The crisp snow crunched under their feet; the sky was full of stars; the sea lay black and still on their left; not a breath of wind stirred in the frozen night. As they swung through the village, some boys were singing carols, outside the "Goat and Compasses."

"Noel! Noel!

Born is the King of Israel!"

they piped, not with any excess of conviction.

The Munitions King laughed.

"There's a bit of news for you, Nappy!" he said. "Won't you stop at the post-office and telephone it up to your Editor? It'd look well across the top of page 6."

"Yes," said the Newspaper King reflectively, "it would. They'd probably prosecute us for blasphemy and the ad would be enormous. But our reputation for accuracy would suffer, I'm afraid. It doesn't ever pay for a newspaper to palter with the truth."

The other two men grinned under cover of the darkness, but they were too polite to say what they thought. Besides, they knew that their companion spoke quite sincerely. That was the cream of the joke.

The Beer King tactfully changed the subject.

"That's an uncommon bright star over yonder," he said, pointing. "Do you see it? Low down on the edge of that hill."

"Yes," said the Newspaper King. "Dashed bright it is. I wonder what star that'll be, now."

The Munitions King halted.

"Star be hanged!" he said. "There's somebody in my cowshed on Ten-acre. Some confounded tramp, making himself at home on my property. The sauce of the fellow, advertising his presence like that. He's probably got a fire going, and he'll be burning the whole place down next. But I'll have him out of that before he's twenty minutes older. Come on, boys."

"Don't you think," said the Beer King, "we'd better get one or two men from the stables? These vagabonds are sometimes rather tough customers."

"Rot!" cried the Munitions King, whom indignation and the knowledge that he had a revolver in his hip-pocket made bold. "There's three of us. Besides, to go down to the stables would lose us ten minutes or more, and I'm not going to have my cowhouse set on fire if I can help it. There's a couple of my long-horns up there."

He meant the oxen with which, in the good old Sussex fashion, he ploughed his fields; for this Maker of Cannon was quite a sort of practical farmer and it was his pleasure and his pride to know all the details of the management of his estate.

The Newspaper King, too, would liked to have gone to the stables, but he was ashamed to say so. The Beer King was ashamed to insist. They set out briskly, gripping their walking-sticks in the middle and striking the air fierce blows, so as to get the true balance of their weapons.

They spoke very little as they went. The outcome of this adventure was uncertain, and their thoughts were filled with surmise. As they drew near to the cattle shed even the Munitions King began to regret his precipitation. But shame held his tongue. Dash it all! If the three of them couldn't send a tramp about his business it would be a pity! Nevertheless, he wished his companions were bigger men. He was not a big man himself. He wished he was. But he had a big voice. He would use it too. He would show this fellow up there, from the word go, that he didn't mean to stand any nonsense.

The shed could now be plainly seen, a black lump on the shoulder of the black down. The light came through the open door, and as they drew up to the building they could see that a lantern had been hung from the roof.

"Well," said the Munitions King, "I fancy he hasn't gone quite so far as to start a fire in there, but what beats me is his impudence in making a light at

all. It announces his presence to half the county. He might have hunted a month and he wouldn't have found a more conspicuous spot. He must be crazy."

"Oh, I hope not," faltered the Beer King. "I've no sort of use for lunatics."

But the excitement which accompanies the crisis of any undertaking had his companions in its grip, and they pressed on eagerly. The Beer King followed because he did not care to lag behind, alone in all that beastly blackness.

"Tread soft," said the Munitions King. "We'll give the blighter the scare of his life."

II

THE Three Kings, going silently across the snow, crept up to the cattle shed. Near it stood a little cart, with its shafts to the ground.

They came to the door and looked in. Next the door the two oxen lay, dozing and chewing; beyond them was a donkey, on its legs and munching hay from its manger. Beyond the donkey, a grizzled man in shabby moleskins sat on a milking-stool, talking in a low voice to someone whom the Three Kings could not see, because she—the voice was a woman's—lay in the darkness of a corner, the man's body being between her and the light.

These trespassers were so much absorbed in one another that they had evidently no suspicion that anyone else was near. The Three Kings, moreover, had made their approach with consummate skill.

The Munitions King drew a little breath of relief. There was going to be no trouble with this lot. The man looked a pretty broken-down kind of vermin. He wouldn't do much in the way of standing up for himself and his mate.

The Munitions King stepped through the doorway and, removing his cap with an air of extreme deference—

"Good evening, Sir and Madam," he

sneered, "and I trust that you're very comfortable."

The grizzled man looked up quietly and smiled.

"Why, yes, sir, thank you," he said, "as comfortable as may be. It's not just the place we'd have chosen, but it might be a deal worse. It might have been the roadside out yonder if I hadn't marked this shed against the sky. So I turned the ass and our little cart in through the field-gate and brought my poor lass up here—it must be an hour gone. If it's your shed, sir, as I think it must be, please accept our thanks for the shelter. I'm glad to say all's well, but it was a near thing."

The Munitions King came to business.

"You've plenty to say for yourself, haven't you?" he said. "But all that civil chat doesn't go down with me. You know perfectly well you've no right to be here, and I'll thank you to put your donkey in and move on. I'll have no tramps dossing on my property. So up you jump, my man, and get busy. You'll be on your way in five minutes or there'll be trouble, d'ye see? I don't know what the police do with themselves hereabouts," he grumbled to his companions. "That light's been here for an hour and not one of them's seen it and come up to find out what was going on."

"And what do you mean," he continued angrily to the grizzled man who sat staring at him in open-mouthed amazement—"what do you mean, you blackguard, by making a light in a place like this? Suppose you'd burned it down? Are you going to pay me for the damage? I rather fancy not. But it's the infernal impudence of it that beats me. Making a light up here where you can be seen for ten miles round. Why, my friend here thought it was a star, it was so bright!"

"Yes," said the Beer King indignantly, "it looked exactly like a star. Didn't it, Nappy?"

"Yes," said the Newspaper King. "I took it for a star myself at first. Infernal cheek, I call it."

"Well," cried the Munitions King, "why don't you get a move on? Didn't you hear me tell you to clear out?"

The grizzled man got up.

"You are ordering us to go?" he asked. "Am I right? Can I be right?"

The Munitions King laughed harshly.

"Yes," he said, "you are and you can. Pack up your traps, the two of you, and push out or it'll be the worse for you."

"I don't think you can understand, sir," said the grizzled man patiently. "You see, there's more than two of us. There's three. The baby came just after we got in here."

"The baby!" exclaimed the Munitions King. "You don't mean to say—"

"Ay, but I do, sir. I told you it was a near thing."

"Good Lord!" said the Munitions King.

"A baby!" said the Newspaper King.

"Well, I'm blowed!" said the Beer King.

"Would you like to see him, sir?" asked the grizzled man.

"Not for worlds!" cried the Munitions King hastily.

He shrank back, as did his companions.

"I say, Alec," whispered the Beer King, "you can't turn 'em out now. You simply can't! Can he, Nappy? Look"—he pointed to the door—"the snow's coming on again."

"Why," said the Newspaper King, "it would be a bit thick. It'd hardly do, Alec. Not a new-born baby. Not in a snowstorm. No! It really wouldn't be the thing."

"Well," said the Munitions King grudgingly, "I expect it wouldn't. Hang it! this chap's been too many for me after all, and I suppose he'll have to stay."

"All right," he went on to the grizzled man. "You can spend the night here, if you want. But mind what you're doing with that light. Leave it where it is. Don't you go starting a fire in here. This place is full of straw."

"Yes, sir," said the man, "I'll be careful. And—I hope you don't mind—"

I've pulled a heap of your straw together for my girl and the little chap to lie on."

"Oh!" grunted the Munitions King, "as to that, they're welcome to any straw you can find lying about. Good night to you."

He turned on his heel and went out of the shed.

"There's a paper in your pocket, sir," said the grizzled man to the Newspaper King. "If you've quite done with it, do you think you could let us have it—to wrap the baby in, you know—under his flannel. It'll make him a thought snugger."

The Newspaper King pulled out the folded sheet and threw it down. It was his own most successful sporting publication, *The Evening Odds*.

He shrugged his shoulders and went out after his host. He was glad that Alec had been reasonable. It would never have done to turn out a new-born baby on a night like this—freezing and snowing and three miles to the nearest town. Not a new-born *baby*, dash it all!

The Beer King put his hand in his pocket and fished out some coppers.

"Here, my man," he said. "Take these."

The grizzled man drew back and the woman, speaking for the first time and speaking proudly, said:

"Oh, no, thank you, sir. We aren't beggars, you know. Really, we aren't."

"Ah," said the Beer King, offended. "Sorry, I'm sure. But just as you please."

He put his money back whence he had taken it and followed the other Kings out of the shed, muttering something about ingratitude and something else about insolence.

III

HE found his friends waiting for him outside.

They exchanged no words as they crossed the field and came to the gate that led on to the high-road.

Then the Munitions King said:

"Buck up, boys. It's gone as cold as hell."

"Yes," said the Newspaper King, "and as black. Where are the stars?"

"Fog!" said the Beer King. "From the sea. Brrrrr!"

As he opened the gate, the Munitions King glanced over his shoulder.

"Good!" he said; "that light's out. Looks as if that fellow had some sense of decency after all. You never know what'll happen when a tramp starts fooling about with matches. I've a good mind to send one of the men up to shift those two long-horns of mine."

"Oh, dry up, Alec," said the Newspaper King irritably. "That chap won't burn your blessed cowshed down. He's not likely to be careless, with a wife and a new-born baby on his hands, and no other shelter nearer than three miles."

The Beer King had come to a halt inside the gate.

"I only hope," he said reflectively, "that that baby'll be all right. If it should peg out—"

"Of course it'll be all right," snarled the Munitions King. "Why shouldn't it? Those gipsy kids are as strong as weasels. Come on."

"Well," said the Beer King, "but suppose it *should* peg out."

"Well," echoed his host, "and suppose it should. It's not our affair, is it? One pauper less—"

"Half a moment, Alec," said the Newspaper King, who had also come to a stand. "I see what Julius means, and he's right. If that baby dies, there'll be an inquest very likely, and it may come out that you were up there just now, and people'll perhaps wonder why you left a new-born baby to get through his first night in a draughty cattle-shed. They'll say that you ought—"

"Let 'em," said the Munitions King.

"No, Nappy," cried the Beer King, "they'll say that *we* ought. For *we'll* be in it too, Nappy."

"By Jove!" said the Newspaper King, pondering. "So we will."

He scratched his nose and stood a moment, thinking.

"See here, Alec," he said, "this'll make a pretty rotten story, if that kid dies. If one of those Socialist rags smells it out, we shall get it right in the neck. But, on the other hand, if—"

The Munitions King set his jaw.

"What do I care for any rags, Socialist or otherwise?" he demanded. "I suppose," he sneered, "you'd like me to send up the saloon car for these beggars and take them all into Stoneyport and engage a suite for them at the Grand Hotel."

The Newspaper King struck his hands softly together.

"By Jingo, Alec," he said, "you've hit it. Now that's precisely what you're going to do, my boy. What a couple of columns I can make of this for *The Wire*! Why, England'll eat it. There's nothing England likes so much as a tender-hearted millionaire served up to her with her breakfast bacon—*three* tender-hearted millionaires, I mean."

"That's the stuff," said the Beer King. "You listen to what Nappy says, Alec. It'll do us a powerful lot of good with the public. And we can stand it, old man. The public doesn't precisely love us millionaires. It's your positive duty to do this. It's a big chance, and it won't cost much. Anyhow, if you'll send your car, I'll foot the bill at the Grand."

"Why," said the Munitions King slowly, "dashed if I don't believe you're right, you two. I believe it would be pretty popular, if Nappy works it as it can be worked."

"You can depend on that, my boy," said the Newspaper King. "I'll turn Johnny MacPhee onto it and give him *carte blanche*. Nothing like a bibulous Scotchman for sentiment and Johnny MacPhee is the goods. I'm glad I didn't sack him this morning, as I had more'n a mind to do. I won't do it now; not until he's done this stunt for us."

"But look here," said the Munitions King; "how about fetching those people back to my own house and telephoning

for a doctor from Stoneyport? That would give your Mr. MacPhee something to write about, don't you think?"

"Alec," said the Newspaper King, "you're wasted on munitions. You ought to be in Publicity. But I can go you one better. You'll give up *your own bedroom* to the mother and child. How's that?"

"I've a dashed good mind," said the Beer King, "to adopt that kid. What do you think, Nappy?"

"It would be bully," said the Newspaper King. "Absolutely. Oh, we shall get some good for ourselves out of this stunt, I promise you. I'll send out *The Wire* for a week on this. Just you wait till I begin to get busy. I'll get onto the office the moment we're back at the house, and I'll have Johnny on his way here in a car five minutes later. Come on, boys."

"Half a moment!" said the Beer King. "Suppose we just toddle up to the shed and tell them that the car's coming for them. Then the man can get his wife and the baby ready to shift. And I'd like to leave my cloak for the baby. It's stopped snowing."

"That's a good idea," said the Newspaper King. "I've got my flask with me. I daresay the mother could do with a drop of old brandy."

"I'll give the man a cigar," said the Munitions King. "Come on."

He re-opened the gate and began to ascend the hundred yards of slope which separated them from the cowshed. The others followed him.

They arrived at the shed.

The donkey cart was gone. Yet now there was no way out of the field but the one gate. Nor were there any fresh wheel-tracks in the snow.

They went in and the Newspaper King turned on an electric torch which he had in his pocket.

The two oxen looked up sleepily. They were the only occupants of the cowshed.

"Well!" said the Three Kings in chorus. "Well, I'm damned!"

In This Placid Village

By Willard Wattles

IN this placid village
Where all the little people
No broader are than new-dug graves,
No higher than the steeple,

There is another solace,
There is another grace,
Than thus to rush important
From one to another place.

Passing them, I greet them,
For they cannot even know
How dear they are and silly
No matter where they go.

But sometimes when they pass me
With such an eager pace
In all the turning faces
I see another face,

A lilac breath of April
When my green earth was young,
Three muffled bell notes broken,
And a song unsung.



DON'T cross your Bridgets until you come to them.



The Merry-go-Round

By Julia M. Peterkin

I

A WHITE man came from nobody knew where with a merry-go-round and set it up in the vacant lot across from the village depot. Every evening when work on the plantations was over the gay music sounded clear in the still air, and the darkies flocked down to the village and rode out all the money they had. Then they stayed on a while to listen to the merry tunes.

Flaming gasoline torches lighted the tent, and fiery looking bay and black and gray horses rocked and challenged riders to come try them; and gilded chariots shone bright.

The man's name was Carson. He was white, for his skin was fair, but no such white man had ever been in these parts before. Except for his white skin he seemed black as any of the folks that rode on the merry-go-round.

Maum Mary Parker cooked his meals and took them to his tent. He offered to go to her house to eat, but she refused to allow this.

"No, I rudder fetch yo' victuals here to yo'," she said.

He offered to pay her well if she'd let him sleep in the soft looking, quilt-covered bed that he could see through the open window.

"No," she said, "No white man ain' nebber yet sleep in no bed o' mine, an' I know I ain' gwine sta't wid you."

He laughed and spat on the ground.

"All right, Aunty, but my money's

good as anybody's. I'm sure it's as good as any these white folks round here's got, if they've got any."

"You eat yo' dinner; I'm waitin' on dem t'ings, an' keep yo' mout' off my white folks."

He laughed again.

"Some folks, eh?"

II

JESSE WEEKS worked at the oil mill for good wages. He was strong as a mule and muscled like an ox. He was well fed, for Maum Mary fed him, and besides her good meals he often carried sweet potatoes to the mill and dipped them in the smoking hot oil that dripped from the press. Nothing in the world was better, except sometimes ash cake dipped in that same hot oil for gravy.

Jesse worked at the press ten hours a day, then went home to Maum Mary's, washed up, dressed, and was ready to take Meta, Maum Mary's daughter, to a dance or a party. Now they rode on the merry-go-round every night. One night they'd choose a chariot; another night white horses side by side. Meta sat modestly sidewise as she had seen white ladies sit on real horses. Another night they'd ride bay horses, or black.

They'd be married Thanksgiving with a big wedding. Maum Mary was already saving up eggs for the cakes. For 'twas something in these days to raise a girl and marry her off without anybody's ever having said anything against her.

The first time Carson smiled at Meta she was confused. She dropped a curtsy in return and said respectfully,

"Good evenin', sir."

He laughed, looking at her with bold, appraising eyes.

The next night when Jesse left Meta and went over to the parcher to buy a sack of peanuts, Carson walked over by her and said with a smile,

"You look like you're scared to speak to me. What's the matter with you? Is he got you under the hack?" indicating Jesse, who was returning.

"No, sir," answered Meta in an embarrassed way. She was not altogether certain of his words, for his r's rolled strangely.

Next morning Meta went to the village store, and Carson was lounging on the counter inside.

"Won't you have a dope?" he asked her.

The clerk glanced up at him quickly, but Meta appeared not to hear, and nothing more was said.

When the girl stepped out of the door, Carson got down off the counter and stood in the door and watched her cross the railroad track, then on the path up the hill.

Maum Mary was late getting the clothes in off the line that evening. The washing was a big one.

"Meta, you run on an' take da' white man's supper to him. I ain' likes to sen' yo', but jus' leab de dishes wid him till in de mornin', an' hurry on back."

Carson took the pan from the girl and untied the white cloth that covered it. Chicken, biscuits, hominy, gravy.

"Your ma is some cook, girl. I'll get fat staying here. But what makes you treat me so cold?"

Meta turned away and started home.

"Ma say she'll git de dishes in de mornin'."

"Hold on, what's your hurry? I've

got a book of tickets here for you to ride out. Wait a minute, let me get 'em for you."

But Meta was gone.

III

JESSE cut a step or two to the jazzy music, then asked Meta gaily, a little later,

"What'll we ride tonight?"

"Le's ride one o' them gol' chariots. I declare tha's de sweetes' ridin' I ever ride," declared Meta in her gentle voice.

When the ride was over and a pair of horses had been tried to see which was really the better, Jesse went to the parcher for peanuts. Carson saw him go and came at once to where Meta stood waiting.

"What made you run off so? Whyn't you wait and get the tickets? You must think I want to eat you or something. Why, a girl like you—"

He didn't finish his sentence, for Jesse landed a terrific blow on his jaw, and followed it quickly with another.

A crowd gathered around them uncertain what to do. "You all lef' Jesse 'lone, he knows what he d' do. Dat ain' no white gentleman." One of the older men watched the fight with interest until Carson was soundly beaten, then he took Jesse's arm in a firm grip.

"You done gi' him enough, Jesse. Quit now."

Meta's voice was full of excitement as they walked home up the hill.

"I'm sho glad you done it, Jesse, but I was dat scared!"

But Maum Mary shook her head in disapproval.

"You better mine, boy. It don' do to trifle wid strange white men."

Next morning, before day, somebody knocked on the door of the shed-room where Jesse slept. He jumped up quickly, for the gasoline torches had made him dream of fire. Maybe the oil mill was afire!

He opened the door, saying excitedly,

"What you want?"

Carson's pistol gleamed in the starlight.

"Gawd!" said Jesse at it flashed and he fell, shot through, in the doorway.

The stillness was rent with the shrieks of Meta and Maum Mary. The news spread like wild-fire—Carson had shot Jesse. By dawn, hundreds of negroes filled the village street. Men and women were armed with hoes and rakes, axes and guns. Where was Carson? He was not in the tent where he slept.

The clerk in the village store had already dressed and gone downstairs, from the room where he slept, to the telephone. When he got Central, he said,

"Will you please telephone all the gentlemen around here and tell them that this merry-go-round fellow down here has shot Jesse Weeks? The niggers are pretty well stirred up, and they'd all better come help me get him off on the eight o'clock train."

By sunrise one of the plantation owners on horseback, with a gun on his shoulder, came riding down the hill into the village.

"What are all you niggers doin' here this time o' day?" he asked as he rode through the crowd.

"Good mornin', Cap'n," they answered politely and touched their hats.

"You'd better go on home, all of you. If Sheriff Hill has to come up here this mornin' there'll be trouble for somebody."

There were indistinct mutterings as he hitched his horse to a tree in front of the store and went upstairs to the clerk's room. Soon three more gentlemen rode up, hitched their horses and went upstairs, then two more. At last, nine horses were hitched outside.

Maum Hannah cooked for the clerk upstairs and lived in a cabin back of the store. She came out of her

door with a great pot of steaming coffee that left a trail of fragrance behind it.

"One o' you niggers come open dis door fo' me," she commanded.

When it was done she went up the stairs talking to herself.

The eight o'clock train blew at the river bridge three miles away. There was a hush. Then steps sounded on the stairway, slow steady steps. Ten men came down—no, eleven. In the hollow square they formed at the door was a man with his hat pulled down over his eyes. Another man joined them, the village policeman. He was black, but he upheld the law whenever it was possible.

They walked slowly across the street to the depot, as with the dead, and reached it just as the train stopped. Two men stepped aboard; then Carson; then two more. The train started and the four men got off the rear end of it.

"Looks like you-all are having a picnic out here," said the conductor to the others who were standing outside.

"No, nothing like that," one of them answered.

The white men mounted their horses and rode up the hill toward home. The black people stood around talking in low tones. One of them came over to the policeman and talked a minute, and the policeman walked on down the street in another direction. Soon there was a shout and the tent over the merry-go-round was in flames. Horses and chariots stood still and burned to charred wood, they that had been so gay and swift!

IV

CARSON left the train at the first large station it reached. He went to the station lunch counter, got a sandwich and a cup of coffee, then went across the street where he saw a sign "Board and Lodging." He took a room and went to bed.

When he awoke, the day was almost over. A new moon showed clear through the window. He stretched his limbs, yawned, then got up and washed his face in the china basin. He looked in the glass at his bruised cheek, smoothed his hair with his hands, put on his coat and went downstairs to the sidewalk.

With his hands in his pockets, he looked around. A cotton mill was over on the hill beyond the depot. Not far from it was a large tent. It was no merry-go-round tent. He'd go take a look at it.

He walked through its open door and a red-faced, stockily built man with a black moustache greeted him.

"Well, brother, how do you do?"

Carson's quick eyes took in the Bible on the table, the organ on one side, the hymn books.

"I'm down and out," he answered gloomily. "I thought I'd come talk to you."

"That's right, that's right. Cast your burden on the Lord, brother, it's the only way to salvation."

"But I'm out of a job," said Carson.

"Well, according to John 6:27, 'Labor not for the meat that perisheth.' What's your business, brother?"

Carson hesitated.

"I wish I could get work here with you. I'm mighty handy with a tent. You ought to see me take one down and put it up."

"You know anything about music?"

"I know it from A to Z," Carson answered confidently.

"I've been thinking about getting a regular fellow to go around and help me, but collections haven't been much lately."

"I tell you," said Carson. "You try me. I'll work for my board till you see if I give satisfaction. You won't be out anything much that way."

"How about them gas lights; can you light them?"

"Just watch me."

That night Carson rose from the congregation and gave a remarkable testimony of his salvation from sin. Next morning he practised faithfully on the organ until he could play a number of the hymns to be sung during the services.

"That's right, you got to put pep in 'em," approved the preacher.

Carson soon developed into a fine exhorter, and followed the sermons with a moving appeal to sinners to turn from sin. It was a steadier business than his former one; more exciting, too.

* * *

Jesse did not die. He's only crippled. He has crutches, and drags both feet together when he walks. He makes baskets and fish traps and chair bottoms out of split hickory.

Meta and Maum Mary take in washing still, and all together they make a living. Maum Mary is careful to take a part of their earnings to pay the preacher.

"Preachers is de servants ob Gawd, Meta, we 'bliged to take care of 'em or de worl' 'ud git too full o' sin."



TAKE your time. A man can walk much farther than he can run.

Back to Methuselah

By Paul Eldridge

SHOULD a man die at fifty or sixty when he could easily reach the age of a hundred or more? Just a few simple rules about sleeping and eating and breathing. . . . He determined to follow them. He went to bed every night at 9.30 and awoke at 6. He exercised for ten minutes, drank several glasses of water, and rested. His luncheon and dinner were consumed in deep silence. One must think of one's chewing, not of words. He ate every day several boiled onions and drank two cups of sour milk. He never smoked, never drank coffee, tea, or any intoxicants. He never became angry, never grew enthusiastic. The blood pressure must be kept at an even tone; the heart must not be overtaxed.

And so he lived.

His friends and acquaintances began to die off—every year or so another one. Some died at the age of forty, some forty-five, some fifty. Only a few were left who had reached sixty.

He increased his diet of boiled onions and sour milk, and discarded sugar and potatoes. He chewed his food more and more slowly, and breathed his air more rhythmically.

His sixty-year-old acquaintances, one by one, went to their eternal rest. Two or three continued their weary road toward seventy.

He lived on.

His brothers died, several cousins, his nephews. One old friend reached the age of seventy-seven, and departed. He became alarmed, and took further precautions. He discarded meat, and increased the number of onions and the glasses of sour milk. Having lost many of his teeth, he dipped his bread into

the soup first, then chewed the soft dough until it turned to liquid. He slept exclusively on his right side.

Two second cousins, the last of the relatives, died. A parrot that had been the pet of the family for a half-century rolled upon its back and proclaimed its union with eternity. Neighbors whom he knew by sight stretched out one by one and were no more.

He lived on.

His eyes becoming steadily weaker, he changed his glasses often. His thin legs wearying rapidly, he used a heavy cane. His blood pumping more and more coolly, he covered himself with thicker and thicker underwear, and finally fur, even in the summer.

The new generation became old and passed away. A third generation made its appearance. The lake in which he used to swim as a boy was drained and filled, and upon it houses were built; the hills he used to climb, and from the peaks of which he used to shout and listen to the echo, were crumbled and the level ground asphalted.

He lived on.

In his native city he was a foreigner. He dressed differently, thought differently, acted queerly. He lost his way among the streets that became more and more intricate and complex. His legs dragged slowly after him, like the wounded hind-legs of a dog. Uncertain of his sight, he tapped the sidewalk with his cane. The bread causing indigestion, he limited himself to boiled onions and sour milk exclusively.

The third generation grew to manhood and many died off.

He lived on.

Having become suddenly very deaf,

and being afraid of the great dull tumult of Life, he remained in the house. The light smarting his eyes, he could not look out of the window as he desired. He had to pull down the shades during the day and at night use candles. He discarded the sour milk and lived solely on boiled onions.

Three housekeepers died in his service. The fourth one was a thin little woman of seventy who posed as "modern," and tortured him with her "new" ways.

He became totally blind. The shades were lifted. The light no longer smarted his eyes. Electricity was once more used. His housekeeper was delighted. The number of onions was diminished. Around his chest he doubled the fur. He coughed and spat steadily.

The third generation grew old, and disappeared rapidly. The fourth cried in its cradle. He lived on. His chin turned upward and met the thin point of his nose, which bent downward. His legs became too weak for locomotion. His housekeeper bought him a rolling-chair. He continued to cough. The number of onions was further diminished.

He became famous. People spoke of him as the oldest man in the city, and one of the oldest in the world, in tones which were both jocular and tender, as though he were a child and a monkey combined.

At his centenary, his picture appeared in all the papers, and many editorials were written about him. In a local paper his housekeeper's picture appeared underneath his, with the words: "May this young lady follow in his footsteps!" The world laughed and was hopeful. The future of mankind somehow seemed brighter and better.

At every turn one saw posters with the following advice: "Eat onions and live to be a hundred!" "Onions contain iron. Iron makes you live a hun-

dred years!" "Onions and Eternity!"

Many of these posters were gorgeously decorated. Some showed young ladies walking between great rows of exquisite onions; others portrayed tender mothers feeding their happy babies on small, dainty ones. One much praised and admired showed the skin of an onion mingling with the petals of a rose. This was entitled "Sisters."

Many stores were opened for the sole purpose of selling sour milk, more as a civic duty than for profit. But the business done was colossal. "Every glass—a day. Every pitcher—a week. Every barrel—a year!"

Teachers, far-sighted and benign, distributed circulars to their pupils. "How to live a hundred years and more: Go to bed at 9.30. Rise at 6. Do not smoke; do not drink coffee, tea, or intoxicants. Eat boiled onions. Drink sour milk."

He lived on.

His right arm was paralyzed. His head shook. He coughed. He spat. His memory retained nothing, save stray words, which he had great trouble to articulate, and stray pictures of his childhood which mingled grotesquely with the present.

He always dozed. Nothing disturbed him. Neither light nor sound. He chewed his very few onions very slowly, very carefully.

His housekeeper died suddenly. His kind neighbors brought him another. He was not aware of the change.

He lived on and on. . . .

At the age of 138 he died. His death was very simple. The difference between existence and non-existence—breathing and a slight pain in the chest—disappeared without a gesture.

Physicians with philosophic tendencies wrote many essays on "Euthanasia" or "The Death Beautiful," and gave forth the hope that all mankind would at last die in that fashion.



The Booklegger

[A One-Act Play]

By Curtiss La Q. Day

A GREEN shaded study lamp glowing over one corner of a flat-top mahogany desk indicates that it is evening, though not later than nine o'clock, as the cigarette butts scarcely cover the bottom of the bronze ash-tray held aloft by a wooden monkey in painted full dress. Between two book-ends at the back of the desk is a row of books including huge tomes of mathematics and various engineering manuals, together with "Lord Jim," "Barrack Room Ballads," "O'Brien's Best Short Stories of 1920," "The Spell of the Yukon," "A Doll's House," "Moon-Calf," "An Unsocial Socialist," "This Side of Paradise," and "Main Street." Lying on the table are volumes entitled: "Life of Lucy Page Gaston," "Life of Frances Willard," "Life of Carrie Nation," and "Anthony Comstock—The Great Purifier."

Turk Grover, about twenty-two years old, is resting in a morris-chair at the side of the desk. An engineer's slide-rule in the front pocket of his purple smoking jacket threatens to fall out each time he leans forward to knock his ashes into the tray. He is continually shoving it back with a frown of annoyance, while he talks to Malcolm Garrett, another upper classman, who sits in a rocker with his feet cocked up on the lounge. Perry Case, a long, thin sophomore who affects Harold Lloyd spectacles, is stretched out on the lounge, his head moving uncomfortably against a leather cushion while he tries to prop his feet over Malcolm's.

TURK

Now take Jerry Holmes. He makes more by peddling grappo among the boys, but he's already a marked man. It's obvious he isn't in the soft drink business. But my case—even the Dean of this dump wrote me a note of congratulation when he heard I was putting myself through college by running a circulating library.

MALCOLM

But the ethics of the thing. To charge fifty cents a day for a copy of "Jurgen"!

PERRY

The entrepreneur always grabs the

gravy. He'll need it if the Committee for Making Virtue Odious ever gets on his tail.

MALCOLM

Oh, damn the blue noses!

PERRY

Are you sure of that woman with the shoestring monocle and walking stick who was here last night? Remember her? She wanted that autographed copy of "The 'Genius.'"

TURK

Mrs. Wrendle? She's president of the Friday Night Browning Society—one of my oldest clients.

MALCOLM

Shades of Sir Anthony Comstock! You charged her seventy-five cents a night for that worn-out volume.

TURK

I leave it to Perry. As a shark in economics he'll vindicate me. My stock is small, so to keep my turnover rapid I charge high rental; it keeps my books from staying out long.

MALCOLM

I repeat: consider the ethics of the thing—aside from profiteering. By charging seventy-five cents a night for "The 'Genius'" you reduce Eugene Witla to the level of a geisha girl. As long as you live off the earnings of Theodore Dreiser you're leading a literary life of shame.

TURK

The trouble with you literary hounds is that none of you get far enough away from the pee-atch-deism that hourly assaults you to really enjoy literature. Think of the satisfaction I feel in starting someone on the road to ruin with Dreiser or Cabell when their mature years might otherwise be spent reading some adult Horatio Alger. Sometimes I have to check my righteous feeling with a curb bit when I realize how my emotional satisfaction in pioneering must be similar to that experienced by other great uplifters.

PERRY

It's the striking application of the law of supply and demand that interests me. You'll notice that each month the librarian publishes a snow white list of books that may be read painlessly. A few dolts read them, of course. Here you have a big supply and no demand. But let a book like "Jurgens" be suppressed and every flapper on the campus wants a copy. Big demand and no supply.

MALCOLM

You're getting banal again.

TURK

Imagine training a bright young man in economics. Is there anything more emasculating, more cramping, more depressing? Anything more platitudinous? Why, economics is the very stuff of which congressional speeches are made.

PERRY

(*Undisturbed.*) Now Turk merely takes advantage of this law of supply and demand as any business man would. Three copies of "Jurgens" at fifteen dollars each: forty-five dollars. Renting each at fifty cents a day he has the three paid for in exactly one month.

TURK

With "The 'Genius'" business is even better. I picked up two old copies for five bones apiece, and another for seven-fifty. For some reason people think they're hard to get. I heard one professor brag in a lecture that his copy was worth a hundred dollars. There's such a demand that I get what I ask.

MALCOLM

Economic theory—pish! Mere human perverseness. Tell 'em that "Tess of the D'Urbervilles" is for men only and all the women on the campus would read it. But would they actually appreciate it as literature—as part of "the precious life blood of that master spirit," Thomas Hardy? Nix!

PERRY

What sour platitudes. Mac, you ought to write newspaper editorials.

TURK

All bunk aside, it's a good business because it gives me a good living without having to do any work. When I become a practising engineer, think how I'll then be able to enjoy literature as an avocation! Imagine the gossip and shop talk I've picked up already—unsubstantial stuff, of course, but it adds to the flavor like an Arabian spice. Only yesterday a woman came in to get a book—she'd forgotten the name, but it re-

minded her of "Gibbon's Roman Empire that Declined and Fell," so she said. Finally I handed her the book she wanted, "Susan Lenox: Her Fall and Rise." And this morning a flapper dragged me into Bradley's for a chocolate sundae, then asked in which canto of "Don Juan" she could find the harem scene. Imagine the miscellaneous knowledge I pick up.

(A knock on the door interrupts them. Perry rises and looks through a peephole in the panel.)

PERRY

It's another one of those damn co-eds.

TURK

Feed 'er and let 'er in.

(Perry opens the door and The Co-ed enters. As Turk and Malcolm rise she waves them down in their seats and drops on the lounge, exposing the water line of her roll tops.)

THE CO-ED

Keep your rocker, Mac. Say, Turk, is that copy of Balzac's "Droll Stories" back yet? Here's your Boccaccio.

TURK

Both copies are still out. You've had the Decameron and Heptameron, haven't you? Do you like Flaubert? "Madame Bovary" is a real piece of literature, though they never managed to keep it off the bookstalls. I rent it at ten cents a day.

THE CO-ED

Oh, give me "The Life of Oscar Wilde."

TURK

Not in stock. Ever read "Confessions of a Young Man"?

THE CO-ED

I always get George Moore mixed with George Eliot or George Sand. Yes, I've read it.

TURK

"Kreutzer Sonata?"

THE CO-ED

Tolstoi! He's terrible—the old nut. *That* book should be suppressed. The old misogynist! If many men got hold of *that* book they'd never look at a girl—even on a windy day.

TURK

Want any more by Dreiser? "The Financier," "The Titan," "Sister Carrie"? They're not suppressed, of course.

(The Co-ed shakes her head.)

MALCOLM

Like Shaw? His style isn't a bit cramped, you know.

THE CO-ED

Tired of him; he gets old. Any woman could have written his shocking "Man and Superman" theories. And "Mrs. Warren's Profession" is not the least bit disturbing.

TURK

"The Song of Songs?"

THE CO-ED

You have a ghastly memory, Turk. That's one of the first ones I read. I was in Doc. Parson's novel course when he came to Sudermann. "The book's unmentionable," says he; "it's terrible; why, it's downright immoral; it's awful." So I was first in the mad rush to get a copy.

(Malcolm casts a triumphant glance at Perry, who mutters "banal" in return.)

THE CO-ED

What?

PERRY

I was just thinking what a rotten title the book has. If they'd only called it "The Confessions of Lily Czepanek," it might equal the sales record of "The Confessions of a Stenographer."

THE CO-ED

There's lots of action in it. It'd make as good a movie as Schnitzler's

"Reigen." I can just see her getting ready to jump off the bridge. And when she reneges you get a beautiful fade-out. Can't you imagine it? Headlines thus: "Produced by David Wark Griffith. Foreword and titles by Dr. Frank Crane." That reminds me, I haven't read that book by the Frenchman—you know—it was a sort of stage scenario for Dorothy Dalton.

TURK

"Aphrodite?"

THE CO-ED

Gorgeous. Got it?

TURK

One copy.

(Turk goes to a black wooden book-shelf braced against the wall like a large flower box. The shelf is filled with obviously conservative literature. He pulls this book-shelf out and reveals another shelf, built into the wall behind much like a secret cache for contraband liquor. Several books lay flat on this shelf, but a few of the shorter ones are standing upright. Turk pulls out a long, flat volume and hands it to The Co-ed.)

THE CO-ED

Isn't this gorge? *(She runs her fingers over the shining, slick pages like a delighted child.)* How much, Turk?

TURK

One dollar for each twenty-four hours or fraction thereof. It won't take you long to read it, and you can stand the price for one day. It's a limited edition; that's why it's so high.

THE CO-ED

I know it'll be worth the money.

(She hands Turk a dollar, and he closes the shelf and makes an entry in his note book. There is a knock on the door. Perry again peers through the peep-hole.)

PERRY

It's Jerry Holmes and Anne Douglas. *(Then through the peep-hole.)* What ho, Holmes, the pass-word.

JERRY

(Through the door.) Virtue is its own punishment.

(Perry opens the door and Jerry and Anne walk in. After exchanging greetings they crowd The Co-ed toward one end of the lounge.)

JERRY

I noticed two pious-looking mouse-footers out in the hall. Are you sure you're not being watched? I'd hate to be here if you got raided.

They'd never find my select literature; it's all loaned out. Besides, they'd see these volumes of the great leaders: Comstock, Willard and Gaston, and that would save me.

JERRY

I'm returning "Venus and Adonis."

ANNE

It's a shame Frank Norris was never suppressed. Everybody ought to read him, don't you think, Turk? "McTeague" frightened me awfully—it's like Dostoevsky. And "Vandover and the Brute" gets into one terribly.

THE CO-ED

What's it like? Jack London and his "Call of the Wild"?

ANNE

What a bum break!

JERRY

Got any unexpurgated Zola and Balzac?

TURK

Everything's out. Business couldn't be better.

PERRY

He doesn't manage it from a sound economic angle at all. He won't handle a book that hasn't literary value, he says. To make money he ought to have everything from the surreptitious pamphlets the train boys try to sell you on up to "Only a Boy" and "Horrors of the White Slave Traffic Revealed."

TURK

But as none of my customers are Puritans they wouldn't enjoy such pornographic stuff.

(A loud trample of feet in the hall is followed by the sudden opening of the door. Two plain-clothes men enter, thumbing back their lapels to reveal their badges. They glance from one youth to another. One of the Crusaders spots Turk as the obvious keeper of the den of iniquity and adopts the usual bluffing tactics, while The Co-ed slips "Aphrodite" under her skirts and Jerry conceals his book.)

FIRST CRUSADER

Your name Grover? *(Turk nods.)* We got a warrant to search this place. The society-for-the-prevention-of-vice has been watching you. Got any illicit literature? Where's your books?

TURK

(Pointing to his book-shelf and the desk.) I'm running a circulating library, if that interests you. Here's one: "The Rise of Silas Lapham," guaranteed pure as Ivory Soap—you can have it for five cents a week. Here's "Adam Bede"—same rate. It's so dull it could be made into a movie that would pass even the Pennsylvania Board.

FIRST CRUSADER

Not so fast; not so fast. I'll look for myself. Come on, Brindle!

(They walk over to the book-shelf and start looking at the titles.)

FIRST CRUSADER

Humph! "A Study in Scarlet." That sounds immoral as hell.

SECOND CRUSADER

It's all right; I read it. It's a Sherlock Holmes story by that English spiritualist.

FIRST CRUSADER

What's this? "Chartreuse of Parma." That sounds like a book of home-brew receipts. *(He takes it down, glances*

through a few pages and puts it back doubtfully.)

SECOND CRUSADER

"The Revolt of the Angels." That sounds sacrilegious as hell.

FIRST CRUSADER

That's all right. I think it's by the same guy that wrote "Paradise Lost" and "Pilgrim's Progress."

TURK

That's the Bible you have there now.

SECOND CRUSADER

(Savagely) I know it.

TURK

Well, don't hold me responsible for the Song of Solomon.

FIRST CRUSADER

"Anna K-a-r-e-n-i-n-a." I remember them saying they wished they could stop that book. "Wilhelm Meister," by that damn German, Goethe, and "Miss Julie," by another Hun. The War Department should have gotten all that propaganda. I bet this guy was a draft evader.

SECOND CRUSADER

"Roget's T-h-e-s-a-u-r-u-s." I guess that's one of those prehistoric animal books.

FIRST CRUSADER

"The Way of All Flesh." I wonder why that ain't on the list. It sure sounds carnal.

(They continue fingering the books on the shelf a few minutes, and, much disgusted at not finding anything to justify arrest, they turn to the books on the table. These too are apparently all right, and they prepare to leave. The First Crusader picks up a copy of "Helen of the Old House," and turns to his companion.)

FIRST CRUSADER

That's the real stuff! If they all wrote like Harold Bell Wright we wouldn't have to be looking for dirty stuff.

SECOND CRUSADER

You bet. That guy Wright can write all right.

(The two Crusaders are convulsed with laughter. After a time their faces become sober.)

FIRST CRUSADER

You got off this time, but there's something funny about it.

(The Second Crusader has picked up the book entitled "Anthony Comstock—The Great Purifier," and is reading it avidly.)

FIRST CRUSADER

It's funny the way people come up here all hours. What's this gang doing here, anyhow?

TURK

This is the Tuesday evening session of the Mark Twain Club.

FIRST CRUSADER

Which one's him?

TURK

Who?

FIRST CRUSADER

Mark Twain.

TURK

He's downstairs telephoning Mark Hanna.

FIRST CRUSADER

I think I'd better finish looking around.

(The First Crusader looks into the desk drawers, under the lounge, then walks to the sleeping porch and back.)

FIRST CRUSADER

I guess it's all right. Come on, Brindle.

(The Second Crusader is so fascinated by the book that he does not hear.)

FIRST CRUSADER

(Loudly and emphatically) Come on, Brindle!

(The Second Crusader looks up. He scowls and steps into the center of the room, eyeing the inmates triumphantly.)

SECOND CRUSADER

We got 'em now, Crisso, we got 'em now! *(He hands the First Crusader the copy of "Anthony Comstock—The Great Purifier.")* That book is the most immoral, prurient, salacious piece of reading it's ever been my pleasure to come across. *(He faces Turk.)* So you've been dealing in such rot and getting away with it, huh? Right under our eyes! Call the wagon, Crisso, we'll pinch the bunch!

(The First Crusader, who has turned to the title page, frowns perplexedly.)

FIRST CRUSADER

Good Lord, Brindle, what'll we do? We don't dare arrest 'em for having this book. See here!

(The Second Crusader looks over his shoulder at the title page.)

SECOND CRUSADER

Well, I'll be damned! That book's by the same guy who started the works that hires us!

Quick Curtain



An Echo From Another Century

By Milnes Levick

I

WHEN he was downstairs, Uncle Joseph stayed in the dining-room. Usually he walked back and forth for a long time on end. At each step his boots, which had no toe-caps, would creak stealthily. He walked deliberately, even tentatively, pausing at each turn as if he had decided some momentous question for himself. As he did this he often moved his lips as in swallowing. He was tall and his legs were long and thin and they seemed scarcely to bend but made long, fragile strides. It was as if they too would creak if he did not go just so. His trousers were round in the legs, which made them seem hollow, for he had never countenanced the fashion of creasing them. They were alpaca, like the coat in whose long tails an angular arm would fumble from time to time and bring forth a handkerchief.

He did this to corroborate his dignity.

He was always solemn, most of all when he was alone. When he was a little boy he, with other little boys of Philadelphia, had thrown pebbles at the Liberty Bell to hear it ring, and had even sent his hoop bouncing against it, making believe he did not mean to, and had then scampered away through the square. In those days he had joined in the rabble that followed the town crier as he went through the streets ringing a bell and calling "Lost child!" But now Uncle Joseph was very dignified.

When he walked in the dimness of the dining-room he pushed his spectacles

up on his forehead. They were steel and the rims of the lenses were octagonal. He saw just as well without them, though the edges of his eyes were red. This redness made them appear small.

Sometimes he would stop walking and look for a long time with a sort of placid effort at something in the room. It might be the set of red drinking glasses on a tray, or the immortelles, of which there was a bunch at each end of the sideboard. Once or twice in a matter of years he would look at the pictures. There were two, both in oval frames of heavy walnut, with a rosette carved at the top. They were photographs: one of a young man with sideburns and the other of a plump young girl in a hoop-skirt. The photographs had been colored and the trousers of the young man, which had no creases, were still a bright blue.

Uncle Joseph would look at them as if a little uncertain of identity: he would stand before the picture of the young man longer than before its companion, seeming not quite to approve, for some forgotten reason. Then he would resume his walking.

Occasionally he stopped with an air of injury or of finding something up to mischief, and he advanced slowly to the clock and took its dome-like glass case off the exposed works and began to poke his long forefinger at this part and that. He distrusted the clock. It was not as old and tried as all the other things about him: he had bought it at the Centennial Exhibition.

As he craned on tiptoe to look inside the works, he would remember different things about the Fair, but not infrequently he got it confused somehow with the statue of Penn on the top of the public buildings. He forgot that the statue was quite recent. He had gone downtown especially to see it before it had been raised into place. It was huge and the exhibition before it had been huge and so the two ran together in his mind until he could not have been quite certain whether the Fair had been made to celebrate the statue or the statue had been a part of the Fair.

He was not conscious of this uncertainty; it merely was there. He accepted the years. Sometimes he thought that it would be very nice if he and Mama should live into the new century. It was not so many years more now and the years came and went smoothly. Maybe it would be brought about, in the wisdom of Providence. It would be very curious. Not everybody could say they had lived in two centuries: first the nineteenth and then the twentieth. But probably one would feel just the same as always.

Uncle Joseph's lips, which were clean shaven, held aloof from the narrow beard that ran all the way around his face. They had a manner of watchfulness for some never-detected frivolity. That, however, was because of his teeth. When Mama came downstairs and they both sat down at the table with the red cloth, Uncle Joseph buttered his slice of bread and then cut a dotted line in it in a semicircle; he bit on this dotted line and as his jaws worked reflectively he would regard the piece of bread as if contemplating how like a real bite the semicircle looked.

Except when she was in the kitchen or at table, Mama stayed upstairs. The old man was called Uncle Joseph because that was the way he was always spoken of by his niece, who lived on the edge of Germantown, and this niece was his only relative. The old woman was called Mama because that was the way Uncle Joseph always addressed her. Mama had a niece, too, who lived on a

farm in Bucks county and sometimes sent the old couple persimmons and things like that.

Mama was plump and wrinkled and still spry, though she moved as little as she could. She wore a black dress with a tight bodice and tight sleeves; a long row of cloth buttons ran down the front, but they did not look as if they were in jeopardy from the tightness because the dress was really held by hooks and eyes which were visible underneath them. She sat nearly always in a low rocking-chair in the front room upstairs. Although the chair was quite low she had to keep her feet on a hassock. The cat lay right beside this. The cat was black all over. Mama looked down at it frequently and her expression of contentment would deepen.

She sewed a great deal. Sometimes she turned around and looked slantwise down the street: when she did that she could see the little bakery on the other side, under the trees at the corner. It had green shutters and its window was made of little panes: she knew that in the window there were crullers, which were very good, for baker's crullers. She had got out of the habit of consulting the "busybody" at the window, however, because she was deaf, and the busybody is really useful only when you hear footsteps on the sidewalk. Her deafness troubled her little, except in church. At home it was hard for her to surmise what Uncle Joseph was saying, because of his teeth, but then he talked very little. She would smile at him knowingly and her eyes would lighten and a ruddy bit of color would form on her cheeks. They understood one another very well without speech.

Quite often Uncle Joseph would walk into the room where she sewed, especially when the sun lighted up the little yellow roses on the wall paper. He would listen to the squeaking of his boots and each time as he turned close by Mama's rocker the cat would seem to become wary, but Uncle Joseph paid no attention to the cat. From time to time he went to look at the busybody, staring at it just as he gazed at the pictures on

the wall downstairs and turning away a little doubtfully.

And sometimes he would sit in the musical chair. He always pretended that he sat because he was tired, making quite a show of the stiffness of his joints. The other chairs were all heavy and of walnut, with round backs and upholstered seats, but the musical chair was of more delicate lines and covered with a flowered stuff. Mama had brought it upstairs years before, because she liked its brightness and thought it went well with the wall paper.

Uncle Joseph made believe that he used it like any other chair, for a chair's purpose. Really, however, he preferred it because it was a musical chair. There was a music box hidden in it and when you sat down a spring was released somewhere and it played a tune. As long as you sat it kept playing but if you got up it stopped abruptly. Uncle Joseph knew both its airs, though he could not have hummed them if he would. He would not have let anyone know that he knew them. He thought Mama didn't know of his liking for the chair, because she was deaf and maybe she had forgotten that it made music. Mama never looked up from her sewing while he was in that chair, no matter how long it might be.

II

ONE day Uncle Joseph heard someone at the front door and when he went to peep at the busybody, walking cautiously lest the creak of his boots be heard, he saw a man whom he did not know. The man carried his hat in one hand and a handkerchief in the other.

After he had knocked twice, Uncle Joseph went downstairs and opened the door a little, putting himself across the sector it made in the narrow hall.

He looked at the man with a predisposed expression and the man looked at him and at the door and the front of the house and back again, while he breathed audibly.

"Excuse me," he said, "but maybe

you can tell me if this house didn't use to be number four-seventeen."

Without letting loose his hold on the handle, Uncle Joseph continued to look inertly. Presently he said "No," and then, after a wait, added, "The year before—no, it was after . . . after the Centennial. Four hundred and seventeen."

The man, who had a round pink face and round blue eyes and a round gray mustache, smiled a little sadly.

"I came a long way to see this house; maybe you wouldn't mind if I came inside a minute, if it ain't too much trouble?"

Uncle Joseph said nothing but led the way into the parlor.

He shut the door carefully and raised the shades precisely to the same height, so that with the sun intensified by the glass the air in the room seemed to become like water just before it boils; and when, with much slowness, they had both sat down, Uncle Joseph looked once more without expression at the man.

"I guess it seems funny to you for me to come here this way, but you see I've been putting it off and putting it off for years and years. . . . You don't happen to know, now, where the people went who used to be here, before you—a long time ago? No?"

He moved his hat from his left knee to his right and looked about him with a kind of reverence, his eyes becoming a little wider. He sat stiffly, as people do at funerals, but he was round all over and so his stiffness was not like Uncle Joseph's.

"It's quite a long way, too, you see. My folks moved West when I was a youngster. Greenville. That's my home."

Uncle Joseph remained impassive and the man went on:

"I remember this very room. I hope you don't mind. My mother used to bring me here. She died thirty years ago. There was a table right over there, with a green baize top. Reuben used to make believe walking downstairs behind it. He'd bend his knees a little

farther at each step till at last you couldn't see anything except his head and shoulders above the table."

He laughed with a sudden nervous sound that was an invitation to Uncle Joseph to laugh too. But Uncle Joseph did not.

"Reuben wasn't rightly his name but he's always been that to me. Whenever I think of how things were when I was a kid I can't help thinking of him. He was better than Kris Kingle. I always think of him as Reuben because of a song he used to sing to me: 'Reuben, Reuben, I've been thinking.' They sang that then the way people sing 'Down Went McGinty' now. It was much nicer. . . . I wish I could find him, just to see him once more. Folks move about so. Maybe he ain't alive now. Let's see: I'm sixty-one; about twenty more—yes, he'd be quite old. I can't think of him getting old. Always singing or carrying me around piggy-back or doing monkey-shines, right in this room."

He waited for his host to speak and was abashed by the silence.

"His name was Joseph," he said.

"Joseph," said the elder, as if asserting an unrelated fact.

"Joseph Erlach," said the stranger.

"Erlach," Uncle Joseph repeated.

"Joseph Erlach. Yes; that's my name."

He looked as before, unmoved, blinking slowly.

"You . . . well!" The stranger appeared to subside faintly.

"Joseph Erlach." Uncle Joseph seemed to be talking to himself. "They changed the number after the Centennial."

"But don't you remember—"

"It was after the Centennial, because we had the clock when they changed it."

The stranger rose and sat down and began to say something.

"You don't . . ." he began once

more, after a little while, but his voice was untrustworthy and his eyes filled as he fumbled with his hat.

They sat there a long time but there was nothing between them. The edge of the sunlight beating through the window moved from one flower to another on the carpet and the old man did not stir. . . .

III

By and bye the stranger roused himself blankly. His sad blue eyes rested on Uncle Joseph. He started again to address him but the old man's stare seemed to go right past him. He rose dispiritedly and looked all around the room in which the legendary Reuben had carried him piggyback; he let his eyes rest a long moment on the corner where the green baize table used to stand.

"Well," he said, sighing, "Well . . . I better go. I got to go."

Uncle Joseph rose too. The other put out his hand in a sudden gesture of unhappiness, but Uncle Joseph was pulling down the shades and the stranger had to open the front door for himself.

He walked away slowly, as if he were not sure of his direction. When he was a little way up the street he stopped and looked back.

Uncle Joseph shut up the parlor and went into the dining-room and walked there a bit, stopping once to tinker with the clock. Then he went upstairs. He put his mouth right up to Mama's ear and shouted. "It was just a man. . . . A man." Mama smiled and her eyes smiled, indulgently, and she nodded with a comprehending chuckle, as if she were in on a joke, as she picked up her needle again and looked down at the cat.

By and bye Uncle Joseph leaned over to rub one shank deliberately and then he went to the musical chair and sat down in it gingerly.



The Romance of a Little Man

By *L. M. Hussey*

I

DEAN'S former wife was a little woman, a little, thin woman, as spare as a cactus. Her ankles were thin, but her legs were as thin as her ankles, so that they came up abruptly out of her flat shoes like sticks. She had no hips and no bosom and she was topped with a kind of withered face, like the face of a prematurely born child. She had no love for Dean, nor did he burn with any passion for her, and neither of them remembered the time when a dumb and inarticulate romance beguiled them, with a sardonic witchery, into marriage.

For years she had threatened to leave Dean. At least once every month, in the course of eight or ten years, she made this threat, in her voluble, acrid way, and he never credited her, never believed that her numberless words implied a possible act.

She delivered her threat every time that he came home drunk. Each of his drunken evenings ended in this same, inevitable way; there was a fatality to this, a law to this, like the setting of the sun or the movement of the tides. He came in out of the street, and into the incoherency of his senses her sharp, high voice would enter and he heard the old complaint repeated a thousand times. He would fall asleep with the words beating in his ears.

Then, in the end, his wife's father died and his wife was left with a little money; a great deal of money it seemed to Dean. A little, imaginative flame of expectation burned up in his mind, for he began to think of the things they

could buy with this money and certain amusements that he could indulge.

He thought of these pleasures for a day or two and passed into a sort of exulting, and in this exulting mood he went out one night and got drunk. Then he returned home and heard the threats of his wife, and went to sleep with these threats still passing out between her thin lips, as he had done for eight or ten years. But in the morning, when he awoke, he found that she was gone.

She did not return. Someone came, a few days later, and took away her personal things, her dowdy dresses and her cotton stockings and her pairs of flat shoes. He never saw her again; she went out of his life like an extinguished candle. A few months after her going he was served with the first papers of her suit for divorce.

Now he lived alone, and the small house in a week or two lost its meticulous order. It became disheveled, like a prim woman who has marvelously taken to drink. The floors were never swept, the chairs were never dusted; there was a multitude of cigarette butts lying about in all corners. Sometimes Dean changed the sheets of his bed, but he practised no regularity in this. He lived uncomfortably, somewhat dazed, wondering when his wife would return.

Then it came to him that she was serious at last. She was divorcing him; they would never live together again.

He began to think about her divorce and consider it seriously, and so he passed through a period of great depression. Every morning he left the house, wearing his uniform and his cap, and during the day he collected fares in

his car, punched exchanges and issued transfers in a mechanical way, for he was living through a period of curious unreality. He could not accept the change; he could not imagine a new way of life.

In these days he did not even drink. He had money in his pocket and did not spend it. He ate and slept and collected fares, like a man in a spell, like the victim of an old-time enchantment. In the end the notice of a final decree reached his hands; she was divorced; he was free.

This was a strange fact for Dean. It was a massive, indigestible fact for a man of little, settled habits. The manner of his life was very obscure to him now, because when he thought of life he thought of it in terms of the old life. Each day he collected fares as before and rang them up meticulously; at the end of his run he came home as usual, but withal this fashion of living was not real to him. The unreality of it troubled him and made him morose.

One evening, because of the heaviness of his spirits, he stopped in the bar-room. He wore his conductor's hat, but, being sensitive about this while with other men, he removed it quickly and placed it unobtrusively upon one of the unoccupied tables. Then he stood for a moment bareheaded, with his straight yellow hair falling down on his forehead, and his small blue eyes looking about him.

He walked to the bar; to the short end of the bar behind the glass sandwich case where synthetical whiskey was, in these days, dispensed. He drank several glasses of an ardent compound and felt some surcease from his dilemma.

Now he sat down at one of the empty tables and stared off at the end of the bar-room toward the opened door that gave egress to the Ladies' Room.

He ruminated upon the change of the times, for at an earlier day this door was always kept closed and a waiter in a white coat remained back in the Ladies' Room to serve the customers there. Now, with business slow and prices high, and quality not what it was, the

bartender himself, watching through the opened door, went back when necessary to serve the occasional woman coming in from the street.

A man with ten thousand words in his vocabulary can conceive certain complexities of thought, but the thoughts of a man with less than a thousand words in his head are limited. Dean stared at the open door and thought, within his limits, upon mutability, and, while he kept his eyes in this direction he heard the tinkling of the little bell that denoted someone coming in through the Ladies' Entrance.

A second later a woman passed into the vestibule and walked quickly into the backroom.

II

It was only a glance that Dean had of her. He saw that she was a big-hipped, broad-shouldered woman wearing, as an enormous decoration, a great circular hat fringed all around with waving colored plumes. Then she disappeared around the door. He knew that she was seated at one of the concealed tables. She was alone.

The knowledge that she was alone provoked Dean curiously. His blue round eyes opened somewhat; he brushed back his tumbled yellow hair; and when he removed his hand it fell over his forehead again. He stood up and, without meditating upon his unusual temerity, he walked through the bar and entered the backroom. He saw her at once, seated at a table, waiting for the bartender to answer her ring.

When Dean came in she fastened her eyes upon him, and the directness of her glance disconcerted him. He became timid; he was afraid; he wondered what he would say, by what means he could explain his intrusion. He thought of the feeble expedient of looking for something, his hat or a pipe or any little forgotten object, but before he moved to act upon this plan he smirked at the girl to cover his embarrassment. In an instant of meeting her eyes he saw that she was smiling at him.

Her smile retired his fears and reinforced his early provocation. He tried to appear careless, assumed an air that was compounded of eagerness and indifference. As he seated himself opposite the woman the bartender came in and waited for the order. He ordered drinks for two, and the woman by her silence acquiesced in their companionship.

"I saw you come in," Dean said, finding it necessary to say something.

"Did you think I was a friend of yours?"

"No, but when I saw you were alone, I thought you might not mind becoming a friend of mine."

"I guess you come in and sit down with every girl that comes in here alone!"

Dean grinned and made no denial. It pleased him tremendously to pass for a woman's man; an adventurous fellow. Every moment his assurance increased, filling his blood with warmth. The drinks came; he raised his glass; they drank together; and both coughed a little afterward and made momentary grimaces.

"That stuff is not what it was in the old days," he said, shaking his head.

"No, I'm almost afraid to drink it sometimes, aren't you?" she asked.

He nodded and, after a moment, asked the woman her name. She said her name was Rose; he told her his name was Harry; and in a few minutes they were calling each other Rose and Harry.

Dean talked to her and listened as she talked to him, but only a part of his mind engaged itself with their conversation. Largely he was experiencing an emotion, a strange, expansive sense of freedom, as if he were on the wing, like a bird, with landscapes flowing away beneath him and the wind singing past his ears. He was born again, young again, startled to know that he was free.

He looked back upon the past few months of uncertainty and dull distraction and marveled at his old moods. Never, until this moment, had he appreciated the opportunities of his wife's

going, the chance of adventure for himself. He grinned and shifted about in his chair like an elated boy.

They ordered another drink, and now the woman opposite was talking to him freely. He disengaged his thoughts from the abstract contemplation of his own good fortune and began to examine her.

She was a type that pleased him, flattered his vanity. He had seen her sort before. He had seen, he believed, just this sort of woman seated in automobiles, riding about on "parties" with laughing men—careless, free women. Sometimes he had seen them come into this backroom, but he had never sat down, intimately, and talked to one of her kind before. With her he contrasted the memory of his little, acidulous wife—that is to say, his former wife. He laughed. His wife was a dried prune!

This woman was large; her size enamoured him. She had a sophisticated face; she talked just a little out of the side of her mouth; she stared straight into his face with her blue eyes; her hair was bleached, he thought, and there was a thick layer of rouge on her cheeks. In her day she had known a hundred men, no doubt, and if she chose to know him now, accepted him so readily, it denoted an unsuspected power of his own personality. He pushed back his hair; he breathed more deeply.

After the third drink Dean, with an almost complete assurance, arose, circled the table, and sat down close beside her. She smiled. A moment later she sighed.

"Why are you sighing?" he asked.

"I was thinking . . ." she murmured.

He teased her to tell him her thoughts and, after she was coaxed, she related the history of a love affair.

"I saw him for the last time this afternoon," she said, "and honest to God, when I came in here this evening I thought my heart was breaking. I didn't know I cared so much for that fella. I guess you can't know a person for ten years and forget them in ten minutes. He said to me this afternoon: 'Kid, I'm going back to my wife; it's all off

between us.' I said: 'Dave, if you leave me this way, I'll kill you, Dave.' He didn't say anything. Maybe he thought I meant it. But I wouldn't harm a hair of his head!"

Her broad shoulders drooped disconsolately and Dean, emotionally, took her hand into his own. There was an excitement in his blood. He conceived himself in the presence of a great adventuress; he was living at last. After a little hesitation he put his arm around her; she leaned toward him, somewhat. Her head fell back and, impulsively, he kissed her. She did not object to his kiss and he kissed her again, two or three times. In the final embrace she responded by seizing him tightly.

"You're a good kid," she murmured.

They drank again; the woman became silent; she drooped once more, her spirits were low.

Dean looked at her, and in regarding her he discovered himself possessed with a new soul. He was a different man. A great adventure had befallen him, and this was, indeed, only the beginning. Bold schemes formed themselves in his mind, trooped across his mind in a romantic host. He felt himself powerful, resourceful, adventurous, as he had never been before.

He placed his hand upon her shoulder, assured and familiar.

"Listen, Rose," he said; "I don't want you to worry."

"Who said I was . . . was worrying?"

"Well, I guess I can see that you're worrying, and I don't want you to do it. Forget this fella Dave. You know me now. Maybe you think you don't know me very well, having only seen me for the first time this evening, but you're going to know me better, every day. I'm going to make you forget all about Dave and everybody else."

As he spoke he saw himself opposed, for her favors, by a score of eager men, anxious to know her, anxious to sit with her as he was sitting with her. He felt himself equal to their opposition; he was contemptuous of this fabulous rivalry.

"I'm free," he said. "There's nobody

got me faded. I don't belong to anybody. And I'd do a whole lot for you, Rose."

She looked up swiftly, examined him with a keen sweep of her eyes and then, on her own account, she kissed him.

The bartender served them a final drink and then whispered to Dean that it was closing time.

The woman stood up and adjusted her hat.

"I'll take you home," said Dean.

"No, I'm going home alone."

"Well, then, I'm going to see you tomorrow. Here. At the same time."

She protested a little, but he easily prevailed over her protests. He watched her as she departed through the side door. Then he made his way out to the bar, unsteadily, and grinned with pride as he said good-night to the bartender.

III

As he staggered home Dean congratulated himself a thousand times, represented himself to himself as a cavalier fellow, and he felt a profound contempt for all his friends. In the house, undressing for bed, he looked up and saw, hanging on the wall, a picture of his former wife. The sight of her face amused him. Her opinion of him made him laugh. He stood in front of the picture and laughed immoderately, until the tears rolled down his cheeks and his hair fell into his eyes.

The next day, ringing up fares in his car, he deported himself as a different fellow. He jerked the bell-cord with a snappy twist, made change with a flourish and eyed every likely woman that came into his car with an unaccustomed boldness. His motorman remarked his manner and spoke about it.

"There's nobody got me faded," responded Dean cryptically.

In the evening, when he arrived home, he removed his blue clothes, tossed his conductor's hat into the corner and put on a light suit ornamented with a slender green stripe. He was careful about his collar and eyed his necktie critically. The disorder of his room annoyed him.

He went to the bar-room as soon as he was dressed, an hour too early, and sat at a table waiting.

As the time approached for the meeting he became nervous and little doubts disturbed him, like whispered words. Some of his assurance evaporated. He recalled his past, the dulness of his old life, and wondered then whether he really possessed the qualities to hold an adventurous woman. The bell of the backroom tinkled. He started up out of his chair; he looked toward the backroom—and saw her come in.

At once he was his new, sublimated self again.

He hurried into the backroom.

She was standing when he entered, and she smiled at him in the most cordial, intimate way, as if they were friends of a long acquaintance.

"Say," she said, "don't let's stay in here tonight, sweetie. I feel like being out and walking around. You don't mind, do you?"

Of course Dean agreed, and so they went out and walked up the street arm in arm.

Dean was proud to be walking at her side, and he eyed every man that passed and believed himself the recipient of envious glances. The plumes on her hat waved up and down as she walked, her large hips swayed, her face was turned to his own, her rouged lips smiled. She did not look like an innocent woman, but like a woman of great experience, and it was this palpable sophistication of her face and person that especially pleased Dean. That was the source of his greatest pride.

They walked three or four blocks and then Dean received an inspiration. He saw a touring car standing on the corner with a sign hung up on the windshield: "To Hire." Most of the savings of the past month were in his pocket and his mood was very expansive; his spirit had opened like a bud. He walked to the curb, spoke to the driver, and then helped the woman to ascend. The car moved off and a fresh wind blew into their faces. Dean leaned back against

the cushions like one who has come into his own at last.

She murmured her approbation.

"You're a dear kid," she told him.

They drove into the park, across City Line Avenue, out into the suburbs. Other cars passed; Dean stared at their occupants insolently. It was a culminating moment in his experiences. The woman had passed her arm around his shoulders. They both reclined against the cushions indolently, and the emotions of these moments were, to Dean, permanent emotions. They would not end; he had no sense of evanescence. He thought of money, and the pinch of insufficient funds no longer troubled him; he cast off the limitations of poverty like an old discolored skin. Now there was money in his pocket sufficient to the hour, and when it was gone, tomorrow, the day that followed, he would get more. It did not concern him where; his assurance was untroubled by detail.

After a time he asked Rose if she were still troubled about the fellow called Dave, and when she told him that her troubles were still in her mind he began to talk to her seriously. He talked expansively, in consonance with his mood. From now on, he told her, she must look to him; he would supply her needs like a conjurer. In the midst of his talk she seized him impulsively, kissed him and whispered:

"Do you really mean to stick to me, kid?"

These words delighted him; they were the confession of her dependence; he was fabulously successful. His blue eyes glowed like round pale fires, his straw-colored hair bristled up all over his round head, he puffed out great volumes of smoke from his cigarette. What an adventure!

His emotions were those of a general following a great, fortunate engagement: there had been plans and intrigues, skirmishes and encounters, a great engagement and a victory. He had defeated he knew not how many men, in a day, within the passing of a few hours, by the force of his own per-

sonality. This flaming woman was his own!

The car turned back at last and they returned to the corner from which they had started.

Dean stepped out, helped Rose to descend and then authoritatively addressed the chauffeur.

"Wait here tomorrow night," he said. "On the same corner. We'll want to drive out again tomorrow night."

Then they walked back to the Ladies' Entrance, drank several glasses of compound, and it was late when they parted.

"Tomorrow evening," said Dean, "at the same time."

He walked home in the company of his new elation, but as he undressed for bed a material thought intruded into his ecstasies. He counted the money in his pocket. There was only a little more than a dollar left.

He was startled, and for some moments he was troubled. But the expansive mood of hours could not evaporate in an instant. He shrugged his shoulders. He would borrow some money. He went to bed and to sleep.

IV

IN the morning, on the way to work, Dean remembered his necessity. He had obligations for the evening; he could not risk the chance of not fulfilling them. A very definite and undeniable trouble entered into his mind. He considered his dilemma all the day. He rang up the fares mechanically, wondering from whom he could borrow money. He could think of no one, for his friends were not the sort who had money to lend. Indeed, it seemed to him he had no friends.

At the end of the day, when he had completed his last run, he stood beside his empty car, his pockets heavy with the fares collected during the day. He must now walk into the office of the division superintendent and make his daily accounting. But he remained irresolute, and while he stood there a flush of his old mood returned to him, a breath of his former expansiveness. He

snapped his fingers, a sense of resourcefulness possessed him and, putting aside the implications of his act, he abruptly walked away, out into the street, without visiting the superintendent's office.

Now and then, as he hurried home, a little fear, like a chill draught, passed through his senses, but he refused to contemplate his act. He was drunk, like a bacchante, with his adventure, his little imaginings.

So he met Rose and they rode out again, and after they dismissed the car Dean took her into the old Ladies' Entrance. Once more they sat together at the table, drinking and talking. Rose was tender. She patted his hands, smoothed his hair, kissed his cheeks; he was proud of her tenderness. He talked about himself, inventing fictions, and he was charmed with the unaccustomed fluency of his fancy.

But little by little he grew less fluent. Something was escaping him, a lightness, an ease, a sense of well-being, that he strove to retain.

He drank repeatedly, as if to hold his courage. After each drink a momentary flush revived him; then he grew silent. His head felt heavy; the lights were blurred. He was curiously apathetic to the voice and presence of his siren. She talked and he scarcely heard her.

Suddenly a great depression descended upon him like an enveloping cloak. He found himself weak, small, deserted, alone. Immense troubles moved through his mind like frightful figures out of a nightmare. He buried his head in his arms; his ears rang with accusations.

The woman touched him, shook his arm and tried to arouse him. Vaguely he experienced her touch and heard her voice in question, but he could not divine her words. She persisted, and in an overwhelming grief he began to sob.

"What is the matter?" she cried.

He raised his face. The tears streaked it like welts of a tiny lash; his scattered hair fell down into his eyes and blinded him.

"They'll get me!" he blubbered. "Maybe they're waiting for me at home

now, hiding behind the door. Oh, my God!"

He cried again and then his lucidity returned for a moment.

"Nobody'll give me tha' money," he wailed. "Ain't got a friend in the world. Alone. Oh, God! I was a fool; what'n awful fool I was!"

She questioned and questioned him, piecing together the facts of his act like a puzzle. Understanding at last, she sat looking at him for a while, and finally seized his arm and lifted him to his feet. She put his hat on his head and took him out of the backroom. Up and down the street she walked with him without saying a word, until the night air began to revive him and some of the fog lifted out of his senses.

"Can you understand me now, kid?" she asked. "Well, then, I'm going to tell you what to do."

She advised him to go in the morning and confess his guilt, admit he had taken the money, offer to repay it from his wages at the end of the week. It was the sole chance, the only thing to do, she said.

"I'll meet you myself in the morning," she said. "I'll go with you. Believe me. I'll stick by you, kid!"

He was grateful for her words, yet troubled to understand her. His assurance was gone, he felt weak and shy and he no longer understood what she found to like in him, by what means he attracted her. He left her on the street and walked home with his eyes on the ground, afraid to think of tomorrow.

In the morning he left the house without breakfast, and rode downtown with a great dejection mastering his spirits. He had very little hope. They would probably put him in jail; that was the end.

"Why did I do it?" he asked. This was the refrain of his thoughts, unanswerable and endless.

Then Dean looked back upon his old life, when every day fulfilled its hours in the way of the day before. He regretted his old, unadventurous drunkenness; he regretted the passing of his wife. She had always protected him; he

felt the need of someone to protect him.

At last, when he got out of the car, he saw Rose standing on the corner waiting for him.

He crossed to the corner; they greeted each other. She took his arm, pulled him up close to her, careless of the passersby. They stood on the corner talking, and people in passing turned to look at them there. In a moment Dean was aware of these glances; he noticed the stares of other men, and suddenly he was proud again, and assured. A hard boldness entered his spirits like a strengthening alloy. He was ready to face the superintendent; what could they do to him? If they put him in jail they would never recover a nickel; if they left him free he could pay them in a week.

"Come, let's go," he said to Rose.

She clung to his arm, looking up at him under the brim of her immense hat.

"When I saw you getting off the car this morning," she said, "you looked like I'd known you for years and years. Ain't it wonderful how you can get to know a person so quick? I wonder how long this is going to last?"

"It's going to last a long time," asserted Dean.

"No. I'll stick. But I'm not so sure about you."

They began to approach the City Hall. A man on the plaza was feeding the pigeons; they flocked about him clumsily, standing on his shoulders, the brim of his hat; they swarmed, like gargantuan flies, over his feet. Dean, in an excess of pride, pointed to this spectacle and then raised his eyes to the Hall tower, to the unearthly statue that presided, with outstretched hand, over the city. A startling idea possessed him. He gripped the hand of the woman at his side.

"Let's go in here," he said hoarsely.

"What do you mean?" she asked.

"I'll show you whether I'm going to stick or not!"

His throat was dry, the sense of an overwhelming adventure was upon him; he did not even hear the words of her reply. This was the master-stroke, the

ultimate defeat of all the envious men that stared after him!

They entered into the corridor, ascended in the elevator, walked straight through the hall to the office of the Clerk of the Orphans' Court. It took less than ten minutes to secure the license. Rose, his flaming woman, was docile as a kitten. He was conscious of his own mastery.

They retired through the hall and turned in at a magistrate's court. Dean did not even have a ring. It did not matter; the ceremony was performed without a ring. This woman was his own!

They came out to the street and proceeded toward the superintendent's office.

"You'll wait for me on the corner," said Dean. "Of course I won't go back to work today. And don't worry. I'm going to say I lost the money. Leave the details to me. They won't get very fresh with me. Ain't I going to pay them back? I'd ram that fellow one in the nose if he got fresh with me!"

She stood waiting on the corner, and he entered the building. He wore his hat a little to the side, like a fellow with nothing but trivial cares; he walked with his head up and his small chest expanded, so that his vest, drawn tightly, formed a wrinkle across his abdomen. He passed through the door and came into the superintendent's office. When his turn came he approached the desk.

"I wasn't able to cash in last night," he said.

The man at the desk looked up. He was a large man, with a grim, large face; he had a heavy jaw, a blue beard and protruding, heavy eyebrows.

"Why not?"

"Well. . . ."

"What?"

The word burst like a shell among the frail defenses of Dean's assurance. He found himself stammering. The preconceived story halted on his lips,

the bulk, the ferocity, the stature of the superintendent frightened him. The man seized his arm.

"I've got your record," he said. "I've got the record of every carman in my district. I know every one of you. You, Dean, you're a booze-fighter. You fight the booze, get drunk on Saturday evenings. I've been watching you."

He stood up.

"I'm not going to call the police this morning," he said. "I'm going to give you just twenty-four hours to turn in your receipts for yesterday. I don't care where you get it. Either you get it or I'll jail you like a rat in a trap."

He bent toward his victim like an executioner about to fulfil the rites of his office. The perspiration freckled Dean's forehead in countless drops, his knees were loose, his shoulders were slack.

"Get out of here!" roared the superintendent. "But you better be back here no later than ten tomorrow morning. Furthermore, don't forget this: you're fired!"

* * *

Dean staggered out to the street. The size of the world, the rush of the streets, the roar of the city overpowered him. He was weak, helpless, and small. A woman gripped his arm. It was Rose.

"What happened?" she cried, alarmed.

He looked at her. He looked at her rouged cheeks with the little veins of wrinkles lying beneath the paint; he looked at her heavy hips and heavy body, and she looked surprisingly old to him. A terrible revelation flashed the culmination of his despair. He saw this woman as, in his little florid imaginings, he had never seen her before. She was old. She accepted him, who nobody else would accept, because he alone would take her. He wanted her; he had her; anybody could have her.

Yes, he was out of a job, out of money—and married again.



Mister Bowdoin

By John Hunter Sedgwick

I

MR. EDWARD EVERETT BOWDOIN had his little establishment in Charles Street at the foot of one spur of Beacon Hill, and here he sold newspapers, periodicals, and stationery every day in the week, not including Sundays. He disliked the word "shop" and had always referred to his "establishment." He had been given his name by parents that admired the distinguished statesman, but contented himself with his last name for the modest sign over his door. As a descendant of an old New England family, he was a disappointment; he was not tall and thin, with narrow, studious shoulders, he did not talk through his nose, he was not reserved and deferential with an exquisite, old world courtesy, though his manners were good enough, and he bestowed no reflection whatever on predestination. On the other hand, he wore the prim blood-stone ring of his great-granduncle, the Harvard Overseer, and he wore low, turn down collars such as all true hearted Boston men wore in the 80's.

Mr. Bowdoin was comparatively a newcomer to the neighborhood, being a much later settler than Maguire, the next door plumber. Mrs. Maguire had never taken to Mr. Bowdoin, deeming him an alien in blood and stuck-up, although he tried very hard always to be polite to her, and, in fact, succeeded admirably. But she regarded him with a cold aloofness and the fact that Mr. Bowdoin was making much less money than

her Bartholomew added but more coldness to that aloofness.

"Bat," said she, one evening, to her Bartholomew, "that fat little Yankee's been in here today. He brought you a book, there, over next to your collar."

Mr. Maguire, after the burden and heat of the day, had removed his collar, indeed he was sitting in his shirt sleeves, although it is hard to understand how a man of his inches could perform this acrobatic feat. He was a tall, lean man from the South of Ireland and seldom smiled, although he was by no means ill natured.

"Is that so?" said Mr. Maguire. "And whom might you mean by that?"

"You know," said his wife. "Bowdoin, the little man that keeps the paper store."

"Give me the book," commanded Mr. Maguire, and his wife gave him the book, which was a volume of the transactions of the Massachusetts Historical Society, rich in detail and close of print. As he turned the leaves, his wife asked:

"Ain't there any pictures in it?"

"No," said Mr. Maguire. "'Tis history."

"What's it a history of?" asked his wife.

"Well," said Mr. Maguire, "so far as I can see, it's a history of the ancient times in the Commonwealth. Some of the people in it have had hotels named after them."

"Umph," grunted Mrs. Maguire.

"Ain't you well, Bridget?" asked her husband. "You're drinking too much tea."

"He said he hoped you'd read it, Bat," said Mrs. Maguire. "Though why you should waste your time on it, I don't see."

Mr. Bowdoin and Mr. Maguire got on well enough together; they conversed not a little, though they differed in certain capital subjects and had ideas that would have clashed sharply, had they not been men of the world.

"Graft, is it?" said Mr. Maguire one day when they had been discussing certain adroit contracts made by a public official. "Graft? 'Live and let live,' I say, an' the golden rule's good enough for me. Where'd the plumbers be without it?"

"I hate to think," said Mr. Bowdoin, fingering a rectangular piece of stiff black court-plaster on his cheek. He had the amiable habit of often gashing himself when he shaved, and he repaired the damage in this fashion. The first year of the war he had begun to stock light toilet articles and he said that he had never regretted it, though the Little Midget tooth-brushes, of which he had bought one gross, had lain on his hands a long time. He accounted for this on the theory that the public must have forgotten to brush its teeth.

"But you know it's crooked," said Mr. Bowdoin.

"I'm no quibbler," said the plumber. "Gimme the *Evening Planet* and a package of envelopes, will you, Bowdoin?"

Edward Everett Bowdoin secretly chafed when Maguire failed to mistreat him. So he said,

"I will, *Mr. Maguire*," and the unconscious plumber took the things and said "Good night."

Mr. Bowdoin hustled about the establishment before he closed it for the night, for unlike the Maguires he did not live over his place of business, but had a lodging on a neighbouring hillside. He was short and stout, very bald, and had a bristling grayish moustache, one end of which appeared to have been burned or

worn off. His trousers were short and flapped about his ankles as he stepped briskly about the establishment with short strides and setting his heels down hard. You have already guessed that Mr. Bowdoin's clothes were not very smart, but he was neat in a weather-beaten way that came to him by descent, and there was nothing pathetic about his neatness, either—it was aggressive and asked no sympathy.

"Well," said Mr. Bowdoin, pausing and looking about the place, "well, all snug for the night. Tough weather to go out, but I don't want to miss that lecture."

II

THE lecture to which Mr. Bowdoin referred was one to be given that evening at the Lowell Institute by a distinguished explorer on the fauna and flora of Patagonia. Mr. Bowdoin dearly loved a lecture, though it must not be thought that he scorned the lighter joys of the cinematograph, which, however, were not always as instructive as lectures, although they cost more. So it was that he passed a warm and pleasant evening learning about the flora and fauna of Patagonia, and when he emerged into the snow and slush and rain of a Boston February night, he remarked to himself once more upon the toughness of the weather and turned up the collar of his mackinaw coat, a garment far too short for a man of his figure and adapted more to the hardy woodsman or the clear-eyed trapper. But he was a sturdy man and trudged resolutely in the teeth of the snow-storm.

He had to pass the Maguire place on his way home, and was within a few yards of it when in the storm he made out three figures that to him seemed very much mixed up, swaying and stumbling and struggling fiercely in the slippery snow. Mr. Bowdoin was right. There were three figures and two of them were those of Peg McManus and of Benny

Stensky, two gentlemen that sometimes left their bowers in the North End and made certain adventures for gain into the law-abiding reaches of the Hill and the Back Bay.

For a moment, Mr. Bowdoin stood stock still and gazed fascinated at the struggle: there was no sound as the three wrestled and punched, while all the time great cobwebby flakes of snow were falling indifferently upon combatants and spectator. But Mr. Bowdoin realized that this show was not entirely for his amusement and that something very sinister was happening.

With a fierce exclamation, he ran unsteadily forward and threw himself upon him that was McManus, at the same time placing a stray kick in the pit of Stensky's stomach, who stumbled forward and fell in the snow. McManus, who was of a race of warriors, recovered himself quickly and twisting himself free, struck Mr. Bowdoin a hard blow that would have hurt him more than it did had not the warrior's fist encountered Mr. Bowdoin's watch. The curious impact and his natural surprise at finding an adversary that seemed more or less armor-plated made McManus pause, and that pause was his undoing. The man that had been attacked now pummeled McManus so fiercely down an alley, with Mr. Bowdoin in swift pursuit, in which he was much aided by the shortness of his mackinaw coat. There had been privateersmen in his family, and he pursued the flying McManus with great fury, emitting at the same time language of a blood curdling nature.

"Come back, Bowdoin! You can't catch him. The other one's skipped, too," shouted the man who had been attacked, and walking slowly back, Mr. Bowdoin saw Maguire before him, his hat smashed and his trousers dark with melted snow where he had been forced down by his assailants.

"What!" said Mr. Bowdoin, peering through his spectacles. "Is it you, Mr. Maguire?"

"The same, no less," said the plumber. "'Twas rent day and those thugs knew it. But me roll's safe and you're the man that saved it. You're hot stuff."

"Thank you," said Mr. Bowdoin, much gratified by this compliment. "Are you hurt?"

"No, but they kicked me cruel. You'll have to help me in to the house. Bridget'll be up. It's early yet. Lemme take your arm," and the two walked slowly to the Maguire door, which Maguire, groaning, unlocked. There was a staircase in it leading to the rooms above, and down this came Mrs. Maguire in what may be described as a boudoir costume.

"What are you doing here, Mr. Bowdoin?" she said shrilly. "Have you two been on a spree, or is it only you, and did poor Bat bring you in?"

"No, Mrs. Maguire. It was I that brought your husband. There's been no spree. He's been pounded," said Mr. Bowdoin sharply.

The woman hurried downstairs and threw her arms about her husband, loudly exclaiming and petting him. She was not bad looking and would have been handsome had she paid more attention to her appearance, but in the present mass of nondescript white that she was wearing, her blue eyes and black hair went for little.

While she bestowed her attentions on her husband, Mr. Bowdoin stood quietly, the water dripping from the mackinaw coat; he wiped his spectacles on a damp handkerchief, put them on and said,

"Well, Maguire, I'll be going."

"Good night, Mr. Bowdoin," said Maguire. "'Twas a good job you did tonight," and he put his hand out and shook Bowdoin's very heartily. His wife, however, paid no attention to Mr. Bowdoin and did not even look at him as he went out of the door.

As he trudged up the Hill to his little room, Mr. Bowdoin said to himself,

"Well, he's called me 'Mister' at

last. Glad I was there. He might have been hurt. But why don't his wife like me, I want to know?"

Mr. Bowdoin saw much more of Maguire after that, and the two men became excellent friends. Mr. Bowdoin's physical valour had surprised and impressed Maguire, while his instinct for property made him realize how much the little neighbour had saved him that February night. Maguire often came in to see Mr. Bowdoin and they conversed on many subjects; neither ever changed his opinions, save that they came to think better of each other and to become conscious of that wholesome fact.

One evening in May, which that year happened to be a mild and friendly May, Maguire opened the door of the establishment and saluted Mr. Bowdoin, who was whistling with great power and enthusiasm. Maguire's serious countenance relaxed somewhat as he said,

"You seem gay, Mr. Bowdoin."

"Well," said Mr. Bowdoin, "I am feeling cheerful. I'm going away."

"Vacation?" asked Maguire.

"More 'n that," said Mr. Bowdoin. "I'm leaving."

"Going to move the business further downtown?" Maguire asked.

"No," said Mr. Bowdoin. "Further 'n that. I'm going to Seattle to live."

"What!" exclaimed Maguire. "You're leaving Boston?"

"I have a married niece out there and she and her husband want me to come out and live with them. I leave day after tomorrow," said Mr. Bowdoin.

"Quick work!" said Maguire. "You said Seattle?"

"Yes," said Bowdoin, and he walked about the establishment, his

short trousers flapping joyously against his ankles. "Everything's fixed up and I'm glad to go—sort of a change, you know."

"I was going to ask you to the house for supper tonight," said Maguire. "But I see you're too busy. Anyhow," said he, wringing Mr. Bowdoin by the hand, "here's good-bye and the best of luck!"

About a month after Mr. Bowdoin's departure, the Maguires were seated at supper and as they had very liberal ideas about food, there was plenty on the table. But that evening his solicitous wife observed that Maguire ate little and that but indifferently.

"What's the matter, Bat? Ain't you hungry?" she asked.

"Not very," said her husband.

"What's the matter with the steak, then?" she asked. "I'll bet that little sawed-off Yankee hadn't as good." To this her husband made no answer.

"Have you seen the new man next door, the one that's taken little Bowdoin's store? Smith, his name is," said Mrs. Maguire.

"Aw, what's a Smith, anyway?" said Maguire in faint exclamation.

"Well," said his wife. "He's as good as Bowdoin any day. Bat, I believe you miss Bowdoin with his spectacles and his court-plaster and his history books."

Maguire had been sitting with his chair tilted back, but now it came down with a bang and his face flushed as he said,

"Shut your mouth, Bridget. Of course I miss him. He was a gentleman!"

"Well," said his wife angrily. "Ain't you, too?"

"No," said Maguire. "An' you know it."



The Lunch Table Liaison

By Ellen Rogers

I

THAT was exactly what Roger had called it, with a tentative little smile. Today, coming into the city to meet him, she repeated it to herself over and over as the 11.05 made its stridulous way through the tidy North Shore towns. She realized, with the surge of tenderness that always surprised her at absurd, inconsequential things like this, how perfectly he had phrased it.

The name savored so good-humoredly of the very elements that had kept their relationship these four months so charming—and, she prided herself, almost wholly within bounds. Something pleasantly furtive, piquant, with its tang modified by homely, prosaic considerations. "Fairness," for instance, "Loyalty," "Playing the game." Very nebulous, creditable things like that. Roger's phrase conveyed this. Well, it was good to know they didn't take themselves too seriously. After all, they weren't just sentimental youngsters caught in a snarl. They were adults. "To look facts in the face," she believed was the term.

Sometimes, of course, she had these incalculably restive moods. A day like this, October in the air, keen and wistful, she could feel heedless even of ordinary considerations. Of Roger's wife, Lora Halverd, whom she had known for years, or of the stark fact that she herself was patently tethered to the Long Island cottage and the stocky affections of her husband, Paul. And her thoughts ran to nothing but "I am in love. Crazy, ludicrously, and all out of season, but there!"

She never felt guilty about this, or about the weekly luncheons with Roger, and their faintly clandestine flavor. In fact, since that evening four months ago, she had been the first to admit the need of seeing each other away from the elaborate casualness of her own name, the country club nearby, or the conscious bantering of Lora.

So she and Roger would meet once a week at the hotel near the station, at twelve-thirty, precisely. She always took the shoppers' train like this. They would lunch together, laughing at the exigencies of their case, lingering until two, perhaps, when Roger would walk back to the station with her, to hold her hand for a moment in a meaningful "Good-bye, dear!" For four months she had kept it at that.

"Perfectly, perfectly blameless—and just a little ridiculous!" she thought to herself as the train shot forward into the gloom of the tunnel. "Not the least bit lurid or devilish or compromising!"

Four months of it, with the intermittent furtiveness, which she despised in spite of her own air of habitual reserve, and the unsatisfactoriness of their precipitous tenderesses. But always there was the deep thrill and wonder of it, coming to her suddenly like this. When she thought herself so definitely settled, so invulnerable, at thirty-four. Never quite disliking her husband, Paul, very actively, nor loving him, exultantly like this. She had thought herself very far from things like this that happened to queer, palpably neurotic people. And now to really touch happiness, perilously, with her fingertips—even though she must be

cautious about not leaving any prints!

She made her way through the crush of women at the terminal, most of them in mannish, swaggering suits with little, clear-cut hats and flat-heeled shoes, and walked down the stone corridor. Such a number of women—and all of them had come in, like her, ostensibly to shop or to *matinée* and then to return to the calm of their Long Island porches. "Sun Parlors," they called them.

She looked at their faces curiously, expectantly. Were they all bound on errands not a bit more adventurous than *A Very Unusual Sale of Philippine Underthings at Special Prices* or that crazy jazz band at the Palace? Had they always been? Perhaps she too looked so complacently self-possessed, so completely "found."

Her thoughts flew back to an evening on the Halverd porch. She was always reviewing the details of it. How this thing of hurried, precautioned meetings, and shadowy, half-acknowledged delight in each other had emerged so simply.

She remembered every bit of it. Lora Halverd had phoned during dinner.

"Come on over," Lora had urged; "we're all by ourselves, and awfully glum and lonesome. Rajah—" Lora's absurd name for him—"has a dreadful hump, and anyhow, we haven't seen you for ages!" It had been just two weeks ago that they had picnicked up the Sound in Paul's motorboat. "And you tell Paul we'll be nice and quiet and won't expect him to talk pretty or anything." Lora knew that after a week-end of golf and visitors Paul would be less than usually inclined toward one of those deliberately sprightly evenings at the Halverd bungalow.

As she had expected, Paul grumbled over his tall yellow glass of *café parfait*.

"Good Lord! You and Lora! Always wanting to chase around, when

it's all right at home. Don't know how to rest!"

She smiled at this, thinking of his eternal fussiness, his way of doing things exactly on schedule, his inability to adjust himself to these between-schedule interludes. But he was invariably amused at Lora's lumbering flirtatiousness, even after six years of neighborliness. And he had driven down the road skirting the bay, smoking his cigar and wondering "when the devil they'd fix the damn ruts in this road, anyhow."

Things like that could make Paul vehemently articulate, even enthusiastic, she mused. She herself had been conscious only of a strange hushed fluttering of leaves—almost hysterical, it had seemed—as they made it going forty-five.

She half wondered why she had urged Paul to drive down, after all. She might have stayed at home and worked on that splashy stage set she'd been commissioned to do for the summer colony's Dramatic Club. It seemed to her that she was always expecting some wonderful lifting of her ennui through Lora. And never getting anything but Lora's fidgety kind-hearted gayety, or at the most the soothing companionableness of Roger. Neighbors, ever since Lora had established herself with Roger in the bungalow.

Lora had been a habit with her even at college, when that air of fervid and slightly coy alertness had been less pronounced. She liked being with Lora and Roger. There was something secretive about Roger, something she couldn't fathom. In the queer lift of his eyebrows, in the single points of light in his eyes. A something which baffled her under their manner of easy camaraderie. Perhaps it was Lora's indulgent hints about his philanderings. She always talked as if every woman Roger met might have given her cause for jealousy, if she were not so broadminded. It invested Roger with the possibilities of romance, and appealed to the

experimental in herself, which had no outlet save in the variety of her color schemes for stage backgrounds. Certainly he was different. Paul was the obvious type, she considered, and so was Lora. She was not sure about herself.

II

LORA waved to them from the porch and greeted them with her usual expansiveness.

"You old darlings. It's so lovely having you near us like this. Although you'd stay away forever, I suppose, if I didn't nag you into coming down."

As always, she looked rumpled and blowsy in her tan pongee dress embroidered with two shades of green. Lora had no originality, but she always asserted that she loved unusual things—the individual touch. So her clothes remained a hodge-podge of indefinite line and hackneyed color combinations. Her home, too, was a muddled jumble of obvious yellow-and-blue effects, chilly plaster plaques above the mantels, and her favorite color, a soggy, formidable gray-blue in rugs and hangings. There were any number of lamps, stiff little parchment shaded ones, or huge, top-heavy ones with fringe and quantities of gold galloway, that Lora had made herself, because, she would tell you, she "loved to get effects."

Roger shook hands with them. Tired-looking, she thought. "Been working on a new list." Roger published these dapper little editions of the moderns.

They grouped their chairs on the porch overlooking the bay, and at first there had been the usual hum of gossip. Somebody had told Lora some "awfully nice things about my voice." She had a surprisingly good mezzo, which she carefully cultivated.

"Just for myself and Roger," she would explain deprecatingly; "not really to do anything with it, you know."

Paul was telling about a "queer bird who came in yesterday." And soon she heard Lora's jerky efforts at archness. "It's just a new Declaration of Independence," she was saying with evident naughtiness. "Life, Libido, and the Pursuit of Snappiness!" Borrowed, certainly. Why couldn't dear Lora ever set the stage properly for her acquired cleverness. She always just missed the effect. It was that way with everything about her. An effect of jamming the brakes down hard, and starting off abruptly on a side road.

She could discern the taint in Roger, too. An intangible let-down, a vagueness and pre-occupation. She noticed he was getting gray, and a trifle stoutish. Lora at college had raved about "a man gray at the temples, girls, and mysterious." Well, there was Roger, graying certainly, and even a bit mysterious! She felt that they were aware of each other, speculatively, she and Roger. She found herself thinking of him as Roger, and not merely as Lora's husband. What a mess it all was!

Out across the water she watched a slim sailboat waver, down-dipped and fragile, gliding surely and quietly out into the blue Sound. A sense of poignancy, of isolation, came over her. She heard Paul's blurred staccato "And I said to Helen, I said, there's this here new-fangled psyche stuff they're all lapping up. Just everybody's silly hankering to tell things, to spill their own story. And if they have to pay for it, so much the better, and the classier."

Did she wish to tell things, to formulate this dulness within her, this leaning up toward happiness, toward joy? She felt her tremendous detachment from Paul, and she was sorry for him, sorry for him in much the same tone in which she cared for him, an indulgent, maternal sort of thing. It would be like that always, and a terrible futility seemed to be stalking her. She sighed to think that she was only thirty-four, after all.

Roger drew a chair beside her. "What a night to whisper sweet nothings!"

She smiled back at him. Lora's high-pitched gayety beat at her:

"You and Roger stay here and slowly wax romantic—Paul and I go to prepare our special brand."

She heard the screen door bang sharply. For a moment she sat quietly. And when Roger put his hand on hers, she was not surprised or flustered, not even when he whispered "My dear!" like that. It was the most plausible thing that had ever happened to her. It was the first time he had touched her, and it seemed that it was for this she had been waiting always.

Since then they had talked things over, of course. "It's not as if we were children," she had insisted. They would manage this with some sort of dignity, in spite of everything. They loved to analyze themselves, like gawky adolescents. And neither of them felt disloyal. This was just—well, different.

Vague hints from Lora about Roger's "affairs" came back to her at times, but nothing mattered now. It was as if, for a moment, something miraculously keen had cleaved sharply through a fog and with the sure sense of their own warmth and nearness, all else was left veiled and shadowy and irrelevant. She, at least, had stopped groping. On one thing they had agreed. There should be no absurd nonsense about running off together for ever and ever. They might play with the idea, knowing it for what it was, but they were both grown-up; they had obligations. And nowadays, in a situation like this, one just managed. It was only on bright, clear days like this that it irked her to remember these obligations. It seemed a pity. A waste. . . .

Roger would be waiting for her now. She could see him as she entered the lobby, and she wanted to laugh aloud at the incongruity of it all. There he was, so patently the

engrossed business man, brief case in hand. Romance, ever so canny in the city, had forborne to spread her mantle around him. Perhaps, she thought, that mantle had long since been neatly snipped into sober gray suits such as his. There was nothing of the predacious male about him, except perhaps a hint of it in his eyes.

She caught sight of herself in the mirror and smiled. The smart suburban housewife, to the life! Why, she looked ever so much more the part than Lora. Lora with her crumpled, bobbed blonde hair, her sagging smocks with art jewelry on her ample bosom and a heavy jade ring on her plump finger. She regarded her own reflection with complacency. The little hat with its crisp black wing over her smooth dark hair, the soft warm tan of her slim suit, the topaz set in old gold on a black velvet ribbon. Lurid? Adventurous? And then for one moment she remembered a day in the country—they had been mad, mad—and she hurried forward to meet him.

III

As always, his eyes lighted when he saw her, and for a moment she found it hard to talk to him, to be casual, to ask penitently, "Am I a bit late?" and try not to show how his invariable "My dear!" affected her. She was conscious of a sharp-faced girl in gray and jade green and a weary looking young man watching them with a bored interest.

Roger smiled down at her. "Well, Little Bird—" he always called her things like that, idiotic, lovely things—Little Bird, and Serious Elf, and Sweet Rogue. "Listen, dear, can't we go right off somewhere, play hookey, say, across the river? I could spare the time today, the whole afternoon?"

She shook her head quickly and held out her tan suede purse, ruefully. "Not today. Fatal Thursday.

Can't you hear the chatelaine jangling her keys? It's the maiden's day off, and I just rushed in to see you"—he pressed her arm—"and then back to the domestic scene!"

"Well, then, can't we go to some quiet place, not all this rush, where we can be almost alone?"

It made her absurdly happy that he wanted that. When Paul said "where we can be alone" it meant that he didn't want to be bothered talking. It was too bad about Paul, he meant well.

They turned down into a side street and found a tea-room, one of those polite places, never crowded, where the genteel guests seem to slink toward the back, and where everyone has the air of deliberately not intruding.

It was decorated in blue-greens and violet tones, and Roger admired the contrasting clear black note of her hat when she sat down. He always noticed things like that—the elements of beautiful arrangements. Paul would merely say, "Some get-up, Girl!" and be done with it.

She sighed, and settled herself more comfortably in the little Hitchcock chair while he ordered luncheon. They were lovely colors—blue-green and violet, with bits of orange here and there. Soft, subtle colors. She thought of a background for her and Roger. Clear colors and lovely textures, things not too glossy, dull, satiny woods, furniture with delicate lines, Sheraton probably, and the sweep of curves. Paul, now, was just Mission furniture, Craftsman interiors, brown and green hangings, stencils. She hated brown, dull and sodden. Dependable, perhaps, but wearing in other ways. She drew herself up. No use thinking things. Roger was leaning toward her, and the ladylike waitress had retreated.

He put his hand on hers, and with him she never employed the stale coquetry of drawing it away.

"Helen, listen, dearest, this sort of thing can't go on like this. I wanted

to tell you, before. You must know."

Curious. Again she was surprised. Of course she knew. This sort of thing, this playing with their emotions, as if they were surface things, that alone was bad, unforgivable. She sat there, expectant, and yet knowing exactly what he would say—what she wanted him to say.

Of course it would be dreadfully hard on Paul, on Lora, for a while. But it couldn't be helped, that was all. They would see that.

"Helen, we've been silly, damn silly. It's been my fault. I've known it all along. We thought we could do this thing in a new way—just being airy, and sophisticated, and trying to reduce it to mere talk. All rot, Helen. You must see that yourself. We've got to look facts in the face, and it can't go on this way, piece-meal. We're not children. Let's stop shamming and pretending we're astral beings. We've got to go off somewhere, do you hear, Helen, just us together, dear!"

Something whirled within her. Was it happiness? Where were those talismen, Fairness, Loyalty, Lora and Paul? She said them all over, but they had lost their potency, and her thoughts flew forward. To be done with cheap furtiveness, to go away forever, with Roger. To have a background, do things together. They had wasted four months already. — Happy, wholly happy! How could she speak? He seemed to know that, and hurried on.

"I've got to run out to Chicago. Some copyright tangle. You could say you wanted to go off on a visit, a vacation or something. And I could meet you in a few days. We'd have a couple of weeks together, anyhow. We could manage it."

Even as he said it she prided herself that she had not started, not even a little bit. "Manage it." Lies and evasions. Two weeks together and then home to play bridge with Lora and make fussy desserts for Paul. Of course it could be managed. Others

did it like that. What sort of romantic madness had she expected? She did not feel scornful or angry. Just far-off, indulgent—pitying, almost—the kind of thing she felt for Paul.

"You're not angry, Helen? I thought—I should have known you wouldn't, though. It's too much to expect—to make a clean break like that. And maybe you're right." He

patted her hand. "I'm a simpleton. Frightening you like that. Guess it's the October air, or something." He leaned back and smiled across the table. "Good Lord, it's lucky you're not the intense kind, at least, isn't it? Or, by George, we'd make a thorough mess of things; a miserable mess!

And she managed to smile as the waitress came forward with his order.



Progress

By T. F. Mitchell

HIS progress was rapid. The first time he dined in a real restaurant he was afraid of the waiters. The second time he had the courage to frown a little at some delay. The third time he pounded his fist on the table because of the condition of the *hors d'œuvres*. The fourth time he deliberately spilled gravy on the tablecloth. The fifth time he laughed as he left a ten-cent tip for the waiter. The sixth time the waiter spilled a bowl of soup down his neck.



WHAT worries a woman is not that she is growing old, but that other women seem to be staying young.



MEN are like sheep, always following a leader. Women are like fleas, always following the sheep.



HERO—the animated adjunct of a medal.



The Ideal Woman

By Lawrence Vail

CONRAD wondered what hazard, restlessness, curiosity had thrown these dozen men together — there were hardly two of them who walked the same life street—into 'Le Léopard Gris,' a cabaret deep in the flank of the Butte Montmartre. What wine, too, had they drunk at dinner, which made them, one and all, lay aside reticence of class and attack so intimate and nebulous a topic—the ideal woman?

"I see her small," spoke Monsieur Bompard, "small, young, with yellow hair. Religious, intellectual, I do not care, as long as she be respectful, orderly and willing. But none of these things really matters."

He passed his swollen fingers through the thick blue air as though timidly, reverently caressing a very brittle phantom image. "But it is essential that she be blonde and young and little."

"You're married," I think, queried Conrad.

The bourgeois flushed. "Yes! And what about it?"

"To a middle-aged lady of the dark and comfortable type?"

"What business is it of yours?" growled Monsieur Bompard.

Luigi, the Italian fiddler, who played waltzes and tangos from four till seven and eight till midnight in a Tzigane orchestra on the Place Pigalle, shook his head and smacked his lips to show his disapproval.

"No good," he muttered, "the little blondes! They have no heat, no passion, they cannot rise to grand emotion. Their blood is wine and water, strawberry-syrup and tepid seltzer. They're always complaining, always asking you for something—clothes, money, amuse-

ments. And what do they give you in return? Nothing, *caro mio*, but indigestion and bad temper. To feed them you must have a fortune. Fat women, on the other hand, eat little, drink less. They have only one thought in mind—to get thin. Ah, give me a dark and mature Romagnuola, a fine piece of a woman from Bologna. They alone are worthy of the love of a healthy, normal man."

Jonas Dreyfus, the pawnbroker from the Batignolles, rubbed his lean dry hands.

"Yes," he uttered, his eyes gleaming, "dark and abundant, with long black hair and great black eyes. But not too old, not one day over seventeen. You can form them, mould them at that age, teach them to keep shop, flatter the customer, and economize."

"I have driven many of them in my time," drawled an old cab driver, his purple face ragged and battered as the ancient top hat he wore askew on his bald head. "For thirty years I have driven them through the city, from the Porte Maillot to the Bon Marché, from Menilmontant to the Bois, long before these mad tearing taxis came to frighten our good horses and disturb the honest Paris traffic. I have driven chic ladies who live on the Avenue du Bois; actresses, cocottes and their lovers; the thin young ladies who go with their governesses to music lessons carrying absurd rolls of paper under their arms. You can trust me, I know them well, there is no such thing as an ideal woman. You might as well speak of ideal taxis — there's always something badly made and complicated ready to break inside."

Luigi shook his head and addressed a weak chested weed of a man with narrow slits for eyes who enjoyed a certain reputation in the quarter as the most unsuccessful poet on the Rive Droite. It was common knowledge that he had been living for ten years with a modest grisette from La Vilette whom he beat regularly every Tuesday.

"Surely you," said the fiddler, "the man of genius, who understands women and have been misunderstood by so many of them, surely you can enlighten us regarding the ideal woman."

The poet yawned over his glass of Picon.

"I have a pile of manuscript," he sighed, "five metres high, which has been collecting dust for twenty years. I do not ask you to examine it sheet by sheet, you would without doubt be the first, besides you would not be likely to find the information you require. My studies deal with the freaks of woman-kind, the voluptuous eccentrics, the hysterical erotics, the witches, the vampires, déclassées. I must confess, however, that not one from among these varied outré types constitutes my ideal. My life work could be termed a lyric catalogue of some women I detest. She of my choice must be middle-aged, settled in her habits, conventional; a kindly, genial housewife who would ensure me a bed to sleep in, both sheets of which would be changed once a week, and three solid meals a day. I would retire with her to some peaceful provincial city. And now and then, after dinner, I would declaim one of my wildest poems. It would give me a simple pleasure to note the passage of startled, shocked emotion over her virtuous and honest face."

"How well I understand you!" spoke an emaculated dressed Don Juan of some ten and three score summers. "Only the man of the world and the artist are able to appreciate the rare delicacies of life. The ecstasy of living alone, far from the noise and flurry of the city, with a good, healthy, buxom peasant girl! To hear the clatter of the dear child's wooden shoes! To listen to

her innocent, unsophisticated prattle of hay and cows! To feel about you her strong young arms smelling of common soap and grass! To see her weep from unaffected gladness of heart when you give her a red ribbon for her hair! I would gladly leave Paris this hour if I could discover such a woman. I knew one once, in a village of Touraine; we played together when we were children. I fear, however, she has grown old and haggard. It is distressing how quickly women age!"

"Ten years ago," spoke a tall, dry, man, hard of eye, obstinate of chin, with a strong Yankee accent, "I had the good fortune to encounter my ideal. We waste no time in ideal preliminaries in the States. I married her within a month, she has given me five children, she is my ideal still. All year long we live on a farm, outside Stonewall, North Dakota. Every morning, at 8.17, I catch the train for town. Every night when I come to her I feel as gloriously happy as a young man meeting his sweetheart in the moonlight. But I fear that here in Paris you are too jaded to appreciate the true meaning of romance."

"And you are contented?" enquired Conrad. "You have never a regret?"

"Quite contented!" he spoke firmly, almost brutally, with an air of challenging bravado.

"Does it never happen," continued Conrad, "as you return home after a heavy day's routine, when the little local train lingers at some wayside station, that your eye and mood are caught by the line and promise of some woman, alluring because of her eyes or hair or attitude, because of all the unknown wistful stuff in her? Do you not sometimes wonder, as you see her waiting on the neat important platform for a train that is not yours, why she happens to be there at that hour, why your eyes have chanced to touch her, why you are filled — without logic, without reason, with so poignant a regret? Does not a desire insinuate itself in you, all the more tearing as you know the impossibility of its realization, a desire to break

the bonds that hold you to home and business, to destroy in one mad foolish instant the position you have spent years in making, to leap from your train and follow her—to the end of the world maybe, perhaps to the next station?"

"I have a will," returned the denizen of Stonewall. "I compel myself to find the best in what is given to me."

"How you must hate that will—sometimes," sighed Conrad. "And how flimsy your wife must find it, that is if she ever thinks, as a basis of affection."

"I do not encourage her to think," said the Westerner with a wry smile.

"My case is different," spoke in high treble a little insignificant man in gray. "I like the modern woman."

The coachman snorted, blew his nose. The Italian opened his mouth and stared.

"Yes, the modern woman," repeated the little man, unperturbed; "the one who votes, goes to meetings, writes pamphlets in heavy English, talks on street corners about the equality of sex and rants at the man made world. But I suppose I am in a class by myself. You see, I collect beetles."

"I don't understand," said Conrad.

"It's quite simple. I love my beetles. I catch them in the summer, in the winter I photograph them, catalogue them. All I require is time and peace and leisure. My father wanted me to marry an heiress. Of course I put my foot down, both my feet. I married my cook instead. The greatest mistake of my life, I assure you. She was a good girl as a cook, simple, unaffected, just what I wanted as a wife. I expected her to go on with her cooking while I attended to my beetles, and that we would live happily ever after. Alas! As soon as she became Mrs. Irwin Haverlock, wife of the eminent entomologist, she developed a passion for

society. I had to bring her to dinners, theatres, dog shows, house parties, I might as well have married the heiress. She compelled me to make love to society ladies in order that they should humor her—a most undignified procedure. And how my beetles suffered! I had no leisure to attend to them. Now, if I had married a modern woman, all would have been very different. They have an intelligent attitude toward men: they despise them, especially their husbands. They leave them in peace."

"Why marry at all?" asked Conrad.

"Why not?" cried the little man, waxing purple with indignation. "Am I not a man like any other man?"

The tall business man from Dakota turned to Conrad.

"And you," he said in his dry, caustic voice, "you who ask so many questions—what is your conception of the ideal woman?"

"The woman," Conrad answered slowly, "who makes you feel like holding her when she is running to you."

"That's not an answer," said Luigi, the Italian virtuoso. "One feels like holding all sorts of women for a time."

"Ask Toco," said Conrad, "he may be able to enlighten you."

Luigi went up to the old vagabond who was snoring loudly on the floor and thrust a foot into his ribs. He was a ragged ruin of a man who grumbled against the government because the 'Fortifs' were going to be torn down and he would have no place to sleep in summer, against nature because the rising of the Seine in winter ruined his sleeping quarters in inclement weather.

"The ideal woman," muttered the tramp, pulling at his woeful beard and rubbing his small red eyes. "Give me three bottles of wine and twenty francs. The first creature I meet in skirts will be the ideal woman."



The Eternal Feminine

By William Seagle

IN a city once lived a woman who constantly complained to her husband:
"How can I know you really love me when there are so many other women
you look at?"

It happened then that he took her for a trip on his yacht, and one night
they were wrecked and were the sole survivors to reach a desert island.

There they lived, and after a while the woman began to complain to
her husband:

"How can I know you really love me when there are no other women
for you to look at?"



In Golden Color Clad

By Thomas Moulton

IN golden color clad, now she
Out of the sunset comes to me.
Behind her, golden cattle trail,
And on her arm's a glittering pail.

She laughs across the golden gate
To find me haunt the fields so late.

If sun were sunken, would there be
Such gold to fall on beast and tree,
On her and (in her eyes) on me?

Seeing that maiden come, my heart
Doth me embolden
To swear
Were she elsewhere
This world were not a part
So golden.

For she would bring as radiant light
Were the sun dead, and the day night.



Mame

By Ruth Suckow

I

MAME BUSSEY was the only one of the old Mosher family left in Karnak. Karnak!—people said, when they looked out of the windows of the one train that stopped. Such a name for such a place! All you could see from the station were the depot, a straggling, rutted road, a few wooden stores, a brick bank with a Ford outside, and some elderly frame houses with evergreen trees.

No hope of much doing in the business line there. The only ones who had any money were the banker and the retired farmers, and of course they never let go of a cent.

The Mosher boys, who were hustlers, had one by one got away, most of them to Grundy City, the county seat, known as Grundy. They had all done well. H. H. had a "department store" there, an amazing conglomerate place that sold everything from pants buttons to farm implements and had even a "furniture addition" built out over the river and reached by an outside wooden stairway. But the farmers liked to buy there. H. H. had the trade. "Mosher's Has Got It" asserted the wooden signs planted in front of all the handsome trees along the Lincoln Highway.

Louie had a little ice cream factory to which he was adding an ice cream parlor and up-to-date confectionery.

Bert, the youngest, was in real estate, and during the land boom was reported to have "made money hand over fist." He wanted to get into politics now; meant to run for State Representative. It was because of May, his wife.

She was getting too good for Grundy and was wild to get to Des Moines, the other relatives said.

Of the others, Flo had married a dentist in Waring, Wade had moved to Kansas (he had lately died), and George was farming four hundred acres nine miles out of Karnak. He was supposed to "kind of keep an eye on Mame." Mame still lived in Karnak, on the old place.

It was Louie, however, who had lately heard from Mame. His heart had sunk a little when he had noticed the letter beside his plate at noon. Grace had had her eye on him while he read it—one of Mame's usual hasty scrawls written with a stub pencil on a piece of scratch paper and stuck into a yellow stamped envelope.

"What's the matter *this* time?" Grace demanded.

Of course she had seen that the letter was from Karnak and from Mame.

"I don't know that anything is," Louie answered. "Wants me to come over to Karnak some time and see her."

He thrust the letter into his vest pocket.

"Well, aren't you going to let me see it?"

"Nothing to see. Just what I said."

He did not want Grace to know that he had discerned Mame's usual frantic haste in the scrawl, which was only a few words trailing down the page:

Dear Louie, wish you could come over to Karnak would like to have a talk with you. Come tomorrow if you can if not first day soon. Alick had a

fall last week and has ben pretty lame since. well will expect you soon.

*Your loving sister
Mame.*

Louie did not even speak of Alick's fall. The subject of Mame and Alick was a tender one in this house.

Grace had her suspicions.

"Say how Pearl is?" she demanded.

"No," Louie answered truthfully.

He had once given Mame the fifty dollars to pay for a tonsil operation for Pearl. Grace remembered it.

"Well, you're not going to take anything more out of your pocket to keep them going, I'll just tell you that! You can let Bert do it a while. Let him spend a little on his sister instead of buying new sedans."

Louie said in a low voice—"Pass pepper, Edgar," and did not look up. But Grace's voice and the hard closed-up look on her plump black-eyed face hurt. He had a soft spot for poor old Mame.

II

As a kind of conciliation to Grace—and partly to put off some uncomfortable moments for himself—he did not go to Karnak until the next Thursday, his slack day. Then he called up the house when he was pretty sure that Grace would not be there and told Lorna to "tell mamma papa wouldn't be back until evening." He took the Ford and drove to Karnak.

He stopped on the way at George's for dinner.

George had a big farmhouse which he had just had "pebble-dashed" and a new porch added. Boards and buckets still stood about with little mounds and sprinkles of "pebble-dash." They saw him coming. Maxine, the youngest girl, came out of the house and then rushed back in, and he heard her shouting—"It's Uncle Louie, mamma! Mamma! It's Uncle Louie."

Gustie, George's wife, came to the door and said somewhat shyly,

"Hello, Louie. Better stop and have some dinner."

He stopped to look around. "Well, you *have* got things fixed up!"

"Yes. How do you like it?"

"First rate. Makes a great improvement."

"I didn't think I was going to like it at first," Gustie said, "but it isn't so bad now it's done."

"Why didn't you like it?"

"Oh—I liked the old place the way it was."

Louie followed Gustie into the house wondering a little about her as the other relatives always did. She was a silent woman, with a touch of reserve, almost of melancholy, lurking somewhere in the stolidity of her heavy Dutch-looking face. She was Dutch, too, in the spotlessness of her house, the excellence of her cooking, the cleanliness of her house dresses, so fresh and starched that they achieved a kind of distinction.

The other wives could never quite make her out. They wondered if she wasn't stupid. Still, she seemed to make George happy; they had to admit that. Her own family seemed to care for her. And she was a welcome addition to the picnics and dinners of "the relationship" because of the good things to eat that she always contributed. It was with a memory of this that Louie had stopped at George's, as well as to "kind of talk things over a little with George before he went on."

He sat in the clean, somewhat bare parlor through which a little country wind blew, and smelled the cooking. Maxine had been sent out to the field to "tell papa Uncle Louie's here." George came tramping in.

"Hello, Louie! Wee gates! What you doing around here—peddling ice cream?"

"No, just stopped in to see all these new fixings you're putting on."

"Hey? Pretty fine? Come out and have a look."

Louie followed George out. He would not mention Mame until after dinner, but he could see that George knew that he had something to talk over.

The two brothers stood together on

the hot lawn that seemed hotter with the glare of sunlight on the troughs of mortar and the new pebble-dash that gave off blinding flashes. They were both Moshers, but Louie was smaller in every way than George, and paler, with a scraggly little mustache that was turning gray. George was proud of his house. Louie admired—he really was pleased to see what George had made of the place, to imagine pointing it out and saying—"Yes, that's my brother's place. Farms four hundred acres."

Gustie came and stood beside them and murmured in a low voice,

"Come on in now, George."

He caught at her heavy arm.

"Hey, Louie, what do you think of this girl of mine not wanting to have her house fixed up in style when she had the chance? But I guess she can stand it now it's done—eh, mamma?"

She gave her slight smile with its faint suggestion of melancholy. "Come in now, George. It'll get cold."

George cried heartily,

"Come in, Louie. Setzen sie. Now, make out a meal."

"Well, this is something like!" Louie cried.

Pork, steamed potatoes, fine brown gravy, Gustie's fresh biscuits with new clover honey just off the hive. Gustie knew how to set out a meal! She had put on the gold-rimmed dishes and a clean white cloth even if it was "for just Uncle Louie." She pressed things upon him in her silent, shy, inscrutable way.

He was glad that Grace was not here to cast warning looks upon him whenever he took another biscuit. He liked to be at George's. There was something prosperous and hearty about the household. That same fresh little breeze blew through the big, bare dining-room. Besides, George and Louie, as being nearer of an age and less wealthy than Bert and H. H., were joined in a kind of sympathy, a feeling that the others were "uppish." Now the foreboding about Mame that had been nagging at Louie all week seemed less.

After dinner he went out onto the new

porch with George. George was taking it easy now—leaving the hard work to young Willard.

"Heard from Mame lately?" he asked then.

"No," George said. "You?"

Louie handed over the letter. George read it, frowning and saying,

"Hmp! Well, *now* what—know what's up, Louie?"

"No more than what's there."

"Hmp! Well, sir, those folks are always in trouble." George seemed to draw consolation from a kind of humorous appreciation of this fact. He stared out at the road, shook his head. "I'm afraid we'll have them on our hands yet some day."

Louie was too generally mild to like to say this as baldly as George. But it was what they all feared secretly of Mame and Alick.

"That Pearl's a queer one," George said. "You can hardly drive Maxine here to go and see her. Know Alick lost that janitor's job?" he added abruptly. "Yes, they let him go since they've put up that big consolidated school at Karnak. Well, I don't blame them. It's awful hard on the poor things, but then Alick's in no shape to look after a big building like that. Yeh, Alick's in pretty bad shape. Getting awful blind, poor old fellow. Yeh, blind as a bat. Besides that crippled foot. Had a fall—"

"So Mame wrote."

Louie was shaken. He had supposed that as far as living expenses went, the brothers had "got them fixed up for a while" when they had secured Alick the janitor's job. What he had really been fearing was that one of them was sick again. He felt now that what Grace was always saying was true—it was no use helping them; there would always be something; they were bound to be unfortunate. George seemed to recognize this in a tolerant, half-humorous way. Louie would have liked to sneak out of it and go back, but some vision of Mame's stricken, appealing eyes would not let him.

He got little satisfaction out of

George more than "gathering" that he had had a lot of expense lately fixing up the place and that he thought it was Flo's and Warren's turn to do something. He was going to send Mame a pig when he butchered and that ought to help her through the winter.

"Funny thing," he said meditatively, putting his feet up on the new porch railing, "how those folks seem to let everything fall through their hands. Now, they ought to have made something of that place of Pa's, you'd think. Just seems as if they're bound to be unfortunate. And they're not so slow—Mame's a smart enough woman in her way, always was. Even old Alick—but I don't know! And good folks—I always liked old Mame a darn sight better'n Flo, to tell the honest truth about it. She's awful good-hearted—almost too good-hearted. Don't know which side her bread's buttered on. Well—tell me what you find out."

III

LOUIE drove away feeling slightly disgruntled. It seemed to him that George might easily do more—he was sliding out of it very neatly! He had that big farm. And all the children were grown now except Maxine. If he could build fine new porches—Louie got warm under his collar. He supposed the others were saying the same thing of him. If he could enlarge his business and talk about buying a new Buick—! He supposed that it might look as if he were prospering. But they did not know how many calls he had, with Lorna going to the State Normal and Edgar ready to start into business. He couldn't be expected to support the whole relationship.

But poor old Mame! If it wasn't for Grace. . . . But he simply couldn't stand Grace's fussing. A funny thing how Grace had always had it in for poor Mame. Grace was a good woman; she would do anything for her own folks. But when it came to *his* doing anything for Mame—! She never *would* forget how he had paid for having Pearl's ton-

sils cut out. And she always had a good argument—

"Why don't some of the rest do something for a change? Look at Bert! Look at H. H. Look at even George with that big farm! Seems to me Wade might have left her something instead of leaving it *all* to Lena. They've got three times as much as you have, any of them."

That was true. It was as if Grace sensed and was jealous of the little bit of special feeling he had always had for Mame. She didn't like to have him go there. And there was always a sneaking gnawing remembrance in his heart of how Mame had once, years ago, given him every cent of the small wages she had made working for Dan Peterman at the hotel so that he could tell Old Man Waters he had fifty dollars in the bank and so be permitted to marry Grace!—Of course, he *had* done quite a lot for Mame—

He drove into Karnak.

It was the same old place. When people got money they moved into Grundy. It made him think of the old days, the old folks, Mame—these were all associated. The same old dirt road dipping toward town and then rising a little in the distance. How often he had scuffed along it with bare feet, taking berries to the hotel to sell and perhaps earn a quarter! Old Lingenfeld's place on the left, with the huge evergreen growing right in front of the door. All these houses, growing elderly now like the generation that had built them—with narrow porches, wooden scroll work, ells, gardens, pumps, tall evergreen trees, grapes along the fences—Going away, even, so far as to Grundy, he and the other boys had left all this behind, 'way behind.

He drove up to the old place.

Every time he felt a slight shock to see how small it was, how shabby and unkempt and closed-in, dark and moldering almost under the trees—the sight and smell of it brought everything back. It made him think of the old folks in their last days, and now of Mame.

The house was painted a dingy, faded, darkened, hideous yellow, with a faint reminder of green on the border of shingles around it. Tall trees stood about it, bending their upper branches and rustling in the hot, dreary summer wind that was blowing. There was a fence of wire in loops at the top, rusted, bent down in one place as if something had trampled and run over it. The pump on the sloping platform back of the house, and a wooden washtub broken at the rim, an old broom, ancient bee ware boxes, broken flower pots, a mop with a stiff grayish cloth leaning against the wall. Old sheds, the empty barn, the out-house absurdly trimmed like the house—under the fruit trees an old decayed beehive, reminder of the days when Mame and Alick had “tried bees”; but Karnak was too small and they had had no means of getting the honey into Grundy; before they could do it it had grown old and the ants got into it—a kitchen chair with no back out under the trees—

Alick was sitting out in that old camp chair Mame used to take when they all went camping years ago.

When he heard the car stop he bent forward and peered at it, then slowly got up. He shuffled forward a little way, with his uncertain sight and his crippled foot.

“Hello, Alick!” Louie called out.

“Hello?” he answered doubtfully.

“Can’t tell who I am,” Louie thought.

Alick had been several years older than Mame when she married him. But now Louie was startled to see how the poor fellow had aged the last year. An old man now! He wore an ancient pair of trousers and a shirt open at the neck. He had let his beard grow a little. It was quite gray, and his hair hung in long gray wisps. His eyes were filmed and uncertain, his face sunken in mournful, hopeless lines. He looked like those old hicks that used to hang around the Karnak hotel and depot—like old Uncle Jake Dyer!

“It’s Louie,” Louie called out with false cheer. His eyes slid away from the painful sight. He would not admit

it to his sympathies—must not, could not.

“Oh—Louie, is it?”

“Mame here?”

“She’s somewhere—I’ll call her—”

Louie, in a kind of panic, was glad to have him go. He could not sympathize with him! How lame he was! Could hardly seem to get to the house. If he had been a stranger Louie would have sprung to help him; but being Alick, one of the family, one to whom he was used and whom his prudence would not let him pity, he let him go.

And yet it hurt him to see what Alick had come to. He had always liked Alick. He remembered when Alick was first courting Mame, how he used to bring to Louie and George and Bert, the little brothers, chocolate drops in striped paper sacks. A good, harmless fellow. He remembered how, when the horse had dragged Alick, crippling him for life, and people had said she “would have to give him up now,” Mame had wept and declared she “didn’t care, she’d said she was going to marry him and she was going to do it just the same, if she did have to take care of him all her days.” Well, she had— And yet the poor girl had managed to lend Louie her twenty dollars so that he could marry Grace! Not one of them would have done such a thing but Mame.

He heard steps in the house, turned and saw Mame at the door hastily tying on a fresh apron.

She came out onto the porch with its sloping narrow floor, with the old chair that one of the boys had made out of willow branches when they were all out camping, and which had stood there ever since, since time immemorial—!

Louie greeted her affectionately. He said nothing about the letter and neither did she. They both acted as if he were making a casual brotherly call. They talked about Grace, Lorna, Pearl, Bert and his wife. But he could see a strained, inattentive look on Mame’s face.

Alick had sat down in the willow chair with its checked, faded gingham cushion. He was regarding them with an old man’s peering suspicion. “Get-

ting childish," Louie thought. Once he said with a kind of pathetic pride—"I'm awful blind now. See how blind I am?"

It was his only claim now for attention and sympathy. Louie turned it off with a false hearty cheer.

"You look kind o' thin, Louie," Mame said with concern.

The Moshers did not quarrel as some "relationships" did, and yet it was really only Mame who kept this genuine older sister's affection for her brothers. She had always looked after them. She was older than all of them except Wade. Imagine Flo saying it in just that way! She would have cried, with that faint glimmer of curiosity: "Aren't you thin, Louie? What have they been doing to you?"—wondering if his business wasn't going well, or if Grace wasn't looking after him. Even Grace would have said it accusingly, somehow.

Mame herself did not look very different than she had for years, for she had always had to work too hard and had never had a chance to take care of herself. She was a loosely built woman with straggling hair that had once been red, a corded neck and a kindly, sunken, helpless face. She had lost some more teeth, that was all. Now she had only a few stumps left.

After a time she said, with a vague note of warning in her voice,

"Come into the house, Louie, and see how the old place looks."

Louie was going to protest that it was too hot, when she gave a meaning look at Alick.

"Oh, all right, guess I will," he then said hastily.

Alick peered after them with bitter and yet pathetic suspicion.

"I don't want him to hear," Mame whispered. "He can't do anything about it and it just sets him going."

That old front room—was it possible that it still existed, just like that, was not a dream of his boyhood? That ancient organ, the ingrain carpet, those old, old chairs, the scroll-back horsehair lounge, the "God Bless Our Home" executed by Flo in "spatter work"—? That same old musty house smell that he

associated with the place and all that had ever happened there. Plants on stands and in brackets by the front window. . . .

Mame looked cautiously out. Alick had gone hobbling back to the camp chair on the lawn. There was no use in counting on Alick any more. He was out of it—poor old fellow.

Louie sat down on the lounge with the horse hair that was turning brownish-gray and breaking along the edges. The place was exactly as it had been when the old folks were living, except that every year it was getting more run down. Mame had never had means to change it or fix it up. The only new thing was an enlarged portrait in a gold frame that curled over at the top of Pearl at five, with stringy curls; and a red and yellow pennant labeled "Karnak H. S." fastened up above the organ.

This room always made Louie feel guilty. It brought back so much. Say what they might, it had been a hard thing for Mame to leave her here with the old folks, with Pa getting as queer as he had and Ma so much care. Eleven years she had had of it! Of course it had meant that she and Alick got their living during those years, and yet Louie could not help a sneaking feeling that it had left them worse off in the end. And the brothers had left them the house. That was supposed to "keep them" the rest of their days. H. H. declared that it should have done so—and yet of what actual value was this old gone-to-seed property in a town like Karnak? And suppose they should sell it for some trifling sum—what would they do and where would they go then? It sounded fine—to "leave them the home." Flo was always talking about it. And yet it had been pretty hard on Mame. Louie and George sometimes agreed on that. Would any of the rest have agreed to stay here for such compensation? Would any of the others except Mame have done it at all?

Louie felt a remorseful affection for her, tempered with many other things—with the fear of Grace, the need for caution, the sneaking feeling that he could

not do anything for her again, the pleasing superior sense of his own comparative prosperity that made it so easy for him to dictate, a shudder at the feeling of the old place, an irritation at Mame's and Alick's general helplessness.

Mame would have begun her story, but Louie, with a sudden sense of panic, forestalled her as long as he could.

"Alick's sight's pretty bad, hm?" he said.

"Oh, he can't see nothing hardly, Louie. And he's so awful lame. You know they took his janitor's job away from him?" she asked fearfully. "The boys" had got him that job. "I think it was that Joe Kenney. He wanted it for his wife's cousin, that Overholzer."

"Yes, George told me. Too bad."

"Oh, d'you see George?" Mame asked with a flicker of interest.

"Stopped there as I came by to see the new porch." He did not say "for dinner" for fear that Mame would understand that he had not wanted to eat here.

Mame was sitting in that old rocker that was still loose on the standard and came forward with a jerk that rasped Louie's nerves. Did these people ever fix anything when it was coming to pieces? And yet, where were they to begin? Mame's hands grasped the two chair arms upholstered in faded green-flowered velvet with dangling fringe. Her face had a strained, frightened look.

"Oh, Louie," she said suddenly, "I'm afraid we're going to lose the place."

She began to cry, sniffing weakly and as if she did not expect anyone to comfort her.

Louie sat perfectly still. This was something new—and yet he might have expected it.

"They're going to put paving past," Mame went on in a voice that was shaken, desperate and yet helpless. "The township voted it."

"Why, but—" Louie said unbelievingly—"that can't be. We haven't heard anything about it at Grundy."

"It ain't from Grundy. It's going through the other way. Going to begin at Cass Lake and go on through to Lowton. They're trying to make Cass Lake a resort."

"Hm! I did hear something of that. But—"

"It'll be through here next summer," Mame sobbed.

"Well, but that'll be fine, Mame! That'll put the old place on the map. Maybe Karnak'll grow after all!"

"Yes, Louie, but it's the taxes. I don't see how we can pay a cent more. We just can't. Alick losing that job—" Her voice trailed off.

IV

LOUIE sat, not knowing what to say. The desolate hot wind blew through the house and set a door idly slamming back and forth somewhere. All their doors were loose or did not catch.

In an instant Louie had caught terrifying implications—had seen what it might mean if Mame and Alick had to leave. Was she hoping that "the boys" would help with the taxes? He doubted it. They would realize that the old place was not worth it; that it would be almost valueless after Mame and Alick died. Was she hoping to come to them? He stiffened, inwardly opposing all these things and yet wanting to appear sympathetic. He felt something of that irritation that the others were always feeling, and expressing, toward Mame that hers and Alick's helplessness invited.

"Oh, Louie," she moaned, "what are we going to do?"

Her hand trembled toward him. He grasped it, patted it, feeling like a hypocrite. The sight of her bowed old head hurt him. He would have liked to—and yet he must not. All his family claims arose accusingly before him. The knowledge that he was not going to do anything for her made him awkward and stiff.

"Well, Mame, we'll have to see. Don't worry now. Don't cry. Have you spoken to anyone else? H. H.—or Bert?"

She shook her head and raised her drenched, faded eyes. "It's so hard to tell them anything—I'd rather tell you, Louie, and have you tell them."

Louie's heart sank. But he knew what she meant; and what he felt as his "better self" rose. She had always cared most for him. Almost secret, unexpressed, the bond was closer between them. He had been the sickly one of the brothers. Mame had taken care of him. He could remember when Mame had been the rock and center of his world. Still, he stood up for her, a little sheepishly, when the others discoursed upon her shiftlessness, saying, "Well, old Mame had had a pretty hard time of it." He did not let out his exasperation upon her so baldly and openly.

Mame kept on sobbing, trying to speak between gulps, humbly, and yet with a faint pride she never lost.

"I don't want to ask you boys to do anything else for us. I've had to come to you so much, seems like. Oh, Louie, you don't know how I dread being a burden on somebody! I know if we'd managed better—but somehow we've always had terrible luck. Oh, Louie"—she clutched at his hands—"what can we do? We can't be turned out into the street!"

"There, there now, Mame. There now," he maundered helplessly, realizing what were her fears.

She reached tremulously for a handkerchief, found none, wiped her eyes and blew her nose on the hem of her apron, settled back and grew suddenly so composed that it startled Louie, still in the act of consolation.

"Alick can't do a thing any more; it's no use looking to him for anything," she stated calmly. "Alick's an old man now. He's got to be looked after. Well, I've always had to look after Alick a good deal. He's always meant well—and I guess if that horse hadn't dragged him—But Alick ain't even as much of a manager as I am. But it's Pearl!"

She grew suddenly panic-stricken again. "Oh, Louie, I can't have Pearl turned out! I can't have her 'way off from me somewhere meetin' the hard-

ships of life all alone. And she's so young and ain't a bit strong—"

Now Louie was terrified. He sat perfectly still again, not moving a muscle. Was she going to ask him to look after Pearl? Already he had seen that he could not refuse her, and his mind was ranging over the question of means, of persuading Grace—Pearl was the stumbling block.

He could not help feeling a great deal like the others—why had Mame and Alick needed to have Pearl when they had never had enough for their own two selves! Here, when everyone had thought that Mame was through with all that forever, if she hadn't had to go and have Pearl—so Grace and Minnie, H. H.'s wife, always said. If Pearl herself had not been such a mortally unattractive child—colorless, anemic, light-haired, whining, childish and unaccountable, the child of her parents' age and poverty. Not one of "the relationship" but had a secret fear of being saddled with the care of Pearl some day. But she was the light of Mame's eye, even though Mame saw and mourned over her faults. Mame had had bad luck with her children, as with everything else, losing three of them, one after the other, before they were a year old. No wonder she thought so much of Pearl. The relatives could not blame her. They could take it out only in discussing the deficiencies of Pearl.

But if Mame had been going to ask anything, she sensed his silence and did not.

"It ain't myself I'm scared about," she said. "I could get along some way. It's them to look after."

She clutched the chair arms with her hands and rocked violently, stopping each time with a jerk just when it seemed that the chair was going to fly off the standard.

"Where's Pearl now?" Louie asked.

"She helps Mrs. Kuhlman at the hotel. Oh, Louie, I hate to have her there with all those traveling men and all those fellows working on the road! But Mrs. Kuhlman asked—and she just had to do something."

"She'll be all right," Louie soothed. "She ought to help you out a little. You've always done too much for her, Mame."

They all knew and talked about how she spoiled Pearl, slaving for her, cooking her special food, making her dresses when they had hardly enough to feed themselves. Mame had done just the same thing for all of them once. They had never complained about it then.

"If we only had them bees now with that paved road," Mame said suddenly. "Ray Sawyer out here, he's done fine with bees."

"But you haven't them now."

"No."

Only that tipsy old beehive full of empty, blackened combs out under the apple trees. What had become of the rest? The Lord knew!

"I've tried everything I can think of, Louie," Mame whispered tremulously. "Sometimes I thought if one of the boys would lend me enough to get an electric washer—but that's the trouble, it ain't much use here. They're so many of them farmer women moved in and they all do their own work. Besides, that Mrs. Geshenki's got about all the washing. Cleaning the same way. I do a little sewing, but—if I was somewhere else—"

Louie did not follow this up. He was guiltily aware of sharing the general gladness at having Mame and Alick settled safely in Karnak. He knit his brows, pretending to think of something with his mind a blank.

"Louie," Mame said timidly, "I thought if maybe one of the boys—or some of them—wouldn't take the place off my hands since I can't keep it up?" She clasped her hands, rubbing them back and forth, looking anxiously at him. "Then we could go into Grundy or somewhere and maybe get something to do that would keep us."

Louie cleared his throat, trying to be impersonal and judicious.

"Well, Mame, of course I couldn't say. I'd have to talk it over with the boys. We'd all like to help you, of course—but if we could fix it somehow

so you could stay right here in Karnak."

Mame kept on, however, with her notion of getting to Grundy. "I thought maybe if Bert—well, if we had to leave the place, you know—Bert's got that big house now and 'she' does a lot of entertaining and all—I wondered if maybe they wouldn't want me to come over and help her—"

"Stay there, you mean?"

Mame nodded, looking at him with watery, pleading eyes. "I'd be willing to do it for Pearl and Alick's keep."

Of all suggestions it was the most hopeless. Bert, with his fine new house with its "period furniture" they had all heard so much about. May! who could scarcely notice the existence of Grace and George's Gustie, who always acted as if she did not know that Mosher's, with its plebeian stock and trade, existed. Alick and Mame and Pearl in that house! Poor girl, she could not see the pitifulness of that. May admitting that Alick was her brother-in-law!

"Well, I tell you, Mame," he said shrewdly, "now I've got a notion that Bert's not so rolling in coin as we all think he is. 'Course he made a lot during the war, but then he's lost a lot since. Bert does a lot of speculating, let me tell you. And it takes a lot to run that family of his. And then—don't let this out—Bert's got it kind of sticking in his crop to run for State Representative and get to Des Moines. Besides, Mame, I don't believe you'd be any too happy working for May, that's *my* notion of it."

Mame listened, that hope slowly dying out of her eyes.

"I might help Gustie," she said faintly. "But, of course, she's got Maxine."

"Yes," Louie said.

He was glad that his household was known to be too humble to require help. He ought to have added something about George—about the "lot of expense" and all that to blast poor Mame's hopes in that direction. George was a good fellow, but he was close in money matters, like most farmers. He had worked hard for what he had and he couldn't bear to see any of it go. And

H. H.—well, they were all more or less at odds with H. H. He was too shrewd. Bert was dominated by May. Flo—*Flo* ought to do something for Mame! Hadn't Mame taken care of her household through both those long sieges of illness? Mame had always done so much for Flo—even made her wedding clothes. But Flo was never able to do anything. Oh, no, never!

V

LOUIE sat and tried to think.

"Mame," he said suddenly, "can't you ever do anything with that Texas land?"

Mame shook her head, her face all at once inscrutable. "No, it won't sell."

"Have you tried lately?"

She nodded. He knew from the expression of her face that she had not. That was one thing in which Mame was stubborn as a mule. She and Alick had invested their fifteen hundred dollars from the old folks' estate in Texas grazing land, which was just what Mame and Alick *would* do. It had never brought them in a cent. The rent barely paid the taxes. "The boys" had always urged Mame to put the thing into Bert's hands, to let him try to sell it, or at least make a trade for her. But Mame clung to it with some desperate notion that it "would be something for Pearl some day." At least they wouldn't die and leave Pearl without anything.

Mame seemed to feel that she was going to get no help from Louie. He wanted her to realize that he could do nothing, and yet this made him feel still more uncomfortable; made him cast about for some suggestion that would take the burden of help from him.

Mame said, "It'd be better if we hadn't stayed here, if we hadn't tried to keep the place. But then somebody had to look out for Pa and Ma, and of course we hadn't room for them, and you boys was all so anxious—"

Louie grew hot. He felt that Mame had had vague hopes of getting to Grundy and that he had defeated them. This shamed him, too, for he knew that she might have a better chance of earn-

ing something there. But it would not do.

He shifted this from his mind, put it off with fears of having Mame and Alick "on his hands," with thoughts of Grace.

He could see no way out of the situation this time. Mame and Alick had always been getting into holes through their shiftlessness, their innocence, and that big, unthinking generosity of Mame's. All of "the boys" had lent them money at different times. Mame had paid a little to this one and a little to that one, but had settled no debt in full. There was a general feeling among "the boys" that they were through. Louie could not think of one who was likely to do anything this time. When they had secured Alick the janitor's job they had felt that they "had them fixed."

But Louie said uncomfortably,

"I tell you, Mame, I'd like to let you have something to help you through. But you see how it is, I'm in a pretty tight place just now enlarging the business and all—"

"Yes, I know. You'd help me if you could, Louie. Oh, I suppose it'll turn out somehow."

She put her head on her hands and the tears dripped slowly between her knotted fingers.

Louie could hardly stand it. Only the thought of Grace warned him and held him back now.

"If you could only let me have a little bit to pay on the sewing machine this month," Mame whispered. "I hate—but my old one give out—it was Ma's—and what I earn sewing's about all I take in—"

"Sure!" Louie cried heartily. "Sure! How much do you need?"

"Well—ten, I guess, this month."

He wrote a check for twenty, signing his name large and heavy, as Bert and H. H., not Louie, usually did. The sewing machine would never be all paid for—or he would have to do it. But he guessed he could do that much for his own sister, no matter what Grace might say.

He felt tremendously relieved. Now

he could go home with a better conscience.

Mame looked at the check timidly. When she saw that it was for twenty instead of ten, she came over beside Louie, took his hands and laid her head on his shoulder, crying.

Louie squeezed her hands. "Don't worry, Mame. It'll turn out somehow."

The ghost of his old affection seemed reproaching him. Yet surely he could not be expected—

"Yes. But I don't want to burden anybody, Louie. And I keep thinking of Pearl—"

She sighed. She pressed fondly against him, stroking his hand that was slender and not that of a strong man, with a kind of humble tenderness. She made a vague sound, half a cough.

There was something the matter with Mame—always had been. But no one had ever tried to discover what. It might mean treatment, operations—None of them could have that, not Mame herself. It was one of her fears that something might happen to her and Alick and Pearl would be without her. Mame never bothered "the boys" for herself. It was only for Pearl and Alick, who, as it seemed to the wives, were always having to have something done. Mame would struggle along as she was, used to it, getting along somehow, until she finally died of it some day.

It would mean a lot, after all, not to have Mame here. The loss, somehow, of all the old days, old things. Louie never felt at home anywhere else in just the same way as here on this old familiar lounge with Mame. Not even in his own house, with Grace. He missed in Grace, Lorna, all of them, the unseeking, unexacting tenderness that was for him nowhere now but with Mame. He could do anything and still it would be all right with Mame. To her he would still be Louie. Sometimes he thought bitterly that to Lorna, Edgar, even Grace, he was just "papa," a dependence and source of supply, something entirely adult and without needs or desires of its own. Only Mame seemed to under-

stand the grown-up boy that he still felt himself to be.

Grace was always complaining of how much he had done for Mame, but what was it compared to what she would have done for him? Mame would not have stopped to doubt, to consider. But Louie did, and it made him eager to get away.

"Well, I'm afraid I'll have to go back now," he murmured.

"You won't stay to supper?"

"Well, it takes a good while to drive back, you know."

He was ashamed of this, too, for he knew that Mame always counted on his staying. But he dreaded the meal in that dingy old kitchen, with the tipsy table and the brown oilcloth, with Alick sitting melancholy and old, losing his food before he could bring it waveringly to his mouth, the everlasting apple sauce, the fried potatoes Mame would cook because she remembered how Louie used to like them. There was a very decent little hotel at Perkins where he could stop. He was relieved that she did not urge him this time.

"Well, I'm awful glad you came over, Louie."

"I'm afraid I didn't help you much, Mame. I wish—maybe—"

He was embarrassed at her gratitude for that twenty dollars, and for the fact that he had not shown open exasperation at her plight, as any of the others would have done. It was the accepted family attitude toward Mame.

She still kept hold of his hand.

"You been real well this summer, Louie?"

"Oh, pretty well, yes, except through that rainy time."

"You don't want to work too hard now, Louie, in that factory. It's so damp. I don't like to think of you there all the time."

"Well, I've stood it fifteen years, Mame." He patted her hand jocosely.

"You let Edgar do more of it, Louie. You better bring Lorna and Grace and come over some time. Pearl'd like to see Lorna again. We're so close, but seems as if we don't get to see anything

of each other. Of course I know you're busy all the time."

She went with him to the porch and out to the car, wiping her eyes, but somehow composed again. Louie was very cheerful to take away the sense of not having disappointed her, of running off as soon as he could. All the old family difficulties seemed congregated in the old house under the trees. He was anxious to get away from them. He did not say good-bye to Alick—he was asleep now in the camp chair, his head fallen to one side.

"Well, now, I'll talk to the boys about this, Mame," Louie said between vigorous cranks at the Ford. "And don't worry. You'll get out of it somehow or other."

"Yes, I guess so," she said. She stood by the car, in her old sloppy blue house-dress, with a pair of Alick's shoes on her feet, shapeless and half unlaced, the hot wind blowing her thin hair across her face.

"Well, good-bye, Mame."

"Good-bye, Louie. Take care of yourself, now."

VI

LOUIE drove out of Karnak.

He was glad to get away; glad to leave Mame and her troubles behind, as all of them always had. Anxious to get back to the paved streets, the electroliers, the comforts and comparative

prosperity of Grundy. And yet he was wrought up, ashamed of himself and obscurely angry at Grace, feeling a helpless pity at the thought of Mame. After all, when it came right down to it, she was the best one in the family, the best-hearted, the one upon whose affection they could really rely. And yet, of course, they couldn't be expected—he knew in his heart that his vague assurances as to the boys meant nothing. They with their good houses, businesses—they had always left the mean things to Mame. And got out themselves. Just as he was driving at top speed out of Karnak. And yet what could they do? What could you expect? They had their own families, their own claims. After all, it was each fellow for himself in this world—Mame had had all the hard knocks, somehow. Why did there always seem to have to be one like that in every large family? All of the hard knocks and none of the good things. Why did life always seem to have it in for folks like Mame?

He drove mechanically, hardly knowing when he turned out for another car, or a load of hay. Underneath all his affection and protest there was an unexpressed satisfaction at having managed to get out so well. Grace would get it out of him about the sewing machine, though. After all, Mame's troubles were her own. He was ashamed, sorry—but she would have to get out of it somehow.



WHEN a woman smiles at you, the crisis is near. When she laughs at you, you are out of danger.



The Convert

By John C. Cavendish

I

ENTERING his class that morning, Dr. Hernandez was at once the focal point of every eye. The students had awaited his coming with the utmost expectation; they examined him now as if, overnight, the familiar contours of his face and figure must have changed. Yet he was the same; his two ponderous moustaches still hung impressively over his concealed mouth, beneath his dark, half-closed and incalculable eyes.

Seeing no one, with his customary detachment, he passed up the outer aisle, ascended the raised platform, rested the tips of his fingers on the desk, and as usual began his lecture abruptly.

"Zoologists, of recent years," he began, "have brought under a single classification a certain group of animals heretofore assigned to different *phyllo*. These organisms are of a sort closely allied to the vertebrata, although they lack vertebræ. They do possess, however, a structure known as the *chorda dorsalis*, a smooth, elastic rod arising from the *endoderm*, between the digestive tract and the nervous system, and are called the *Chordata*.

"Johannes Müller was the first to recognize the chordate nature of an animal, the so-called *limax lanceolatus*, then classified as a mollusk, which we now name the *Amphioxus anceolatus*, of the *phylum Chordata* . . ."

Not a student was taking notes, although they followed his words eagerly. They were waiting for the instant when, abandoning the dry exposition of facts, the celebrated zoologist would

interpolate his opinions, his reflections, his philosophema.

What would he say now; what reconciliation would he make, employing these same old facts, so long the weapons of his scandalous utterances? But the minutes passed and Dr. Hernandez continued without pause, speaking like the most literal text-book.

Some of the students began to doubt the reports about his astonishing actions. The lecture hour passed; he bowed to the class, and he was gone in a moment. The students stared after him as upon a vanishing phantom.

But, after all, his escapade was well authenticated. Diego Carbonell, the *enfant terrible* of the city, had reported it, seen it himself—and no matter how scandalous, he was a scrupulous one as to the truth.

The morning before, standing outside the Café La Iberia, whence he had gone to refresh himself after a difficult night, Carbonell had seen Dr. Hernandez enter the plaza from the west side of the Calle Real de Candelaria.

The learned Doctor, absorbed in his usual meditations, and charged with an extraordinary purpose, saw nothing of Carbonell. He crossed the plaza, he paused in front of the ugly cathedral, stared up at the grotesque columns—and then entered.

This was more than astonishing. Carbonell turned swiftly and followed him. The Doctor was already inside. Hesitating a moment, Carbonell himself went through the arched door.

What did Dr. Hernandez propose? Carbonell was immensely expectant. Did he purpose an even more vigorous break with the outraged clergy—some

atrocities in the cathedral itself? Inside the inquisitive young man blinked his eyes, sniffed the heavy incense and for some seconds was unable to locate Hernandez in the gloom.

There were many *fieles* in the cathedral, for this was Good Thursday and the Host, in its receptacle of golden flames, was now exhibited for their kneeling worship. Outside the altar-rail a dozen men and women kneeled, swaying their bodies forward, bringing their heads close to the ground in an ecstasy of abasement. Their hands touched their foreheads and their breasts, making the sign of the cross; their lips moved silently: *en el nombre del Padre, del Hijo, y del Espiritu Santo*.

On his knees with the rest was Dr. Hernandez!

Diego Carbonell opened and closed his eyes rapidly, several times, doubting the authenticity of his sight. Yet the vision was true; this was the Doctor.

An idea came to the watcher; his cheeks flushed with expectancy. Perhaps Hernandez, having achieved a ruse, would now rise up and speak aloud some astounding words that would shock the worshippers into motionless amazement. But the seconds passed; he remained on his knees.

It was outside legitimate credence, but Hernandez was playing. His head fell forward on his breast, his shoulders sagged, the contours of his body drooped in penitent curves. One by one the others arose, that those in waiting might take their places, but the Doctor remained as before, kneeling, abased.

The astounded onlooker turned slowly, passed out of the grand nave, made his exit from the cathedral, and emerged again into the bright sunlight of the plaza. Then he saw his friend Juan Figueredo staring sourly across the square at the Yellow House.

Carbonell beckoned him violently and meanwhile approached him with swift steps.

"Well, *señor!*" he exclaimed. "What do you imagine I have just seen? It is impossible to guess!"

"I don't care what you've seen," said Figueredo, resuming his morose pre-occupation. (The night before he had consumed a quantity of bad claret and his liver was in a turmoil.)

"No? Well then, approach the cathedral, go in, and see Dr. Ramon Hernandez in worship before the Host! Ah?"

Figueredo's eyes shifted rapidly from the façade of the Casa Amarilla to the face of his friend.

"What! . . . Carbonell, you lie!"

II

THE next day Dr. Hernandez was again seen on the plaza, this time entering the palace of the archbishop. A few days later he and the archbishop were seen together, in earnest conversation, driving along El Paraiso in the archbishop's car. The miracle was accepted by the city, but its miraculousness was in no manner diminished.

It was recalled how, two or three years previously, the prelate had made every effort toward the removal of Dr. Hernandez from his chair in the University. That followed after the Doctor's celebrated attack upon the church, with his denunciation of religion as superstition, his learned exposition of scientific fact. Only his prominence saved him. Now the two men were friends.

A thousand explanations were advanced.

Those who had faith in the intimate intervention of Deity said that Dr. Hernandez had been visited by a direct light, by the voice of God.

Others claimed that the light had come to him long ago, that he had struggled against it to save his face, only to succumb at last.

Some of the harsher spirits suggested that he had entered upon the term of his dotage.

Certain inquirers, bent upon more circumstantial reasons, recalled the gossip about his wife, and made a connection between this and his conversion.

It was well known that Señora Hernandez had had some sort of a flirta-

tion with Olavaria Matos, a minister in the Cabinet. It was an amusing affair, because both were at an age when love, stripped of the glamorous justification given it by youth, becomes ridiculous. At the last Presidential ball they had danced together like children. Once they had been seen driving toward the Avila together; did they still go into raptures over landscapes? Several times Olavaria Matos was detected calling at the Hernandez establishment in the absence of the Doctor. Yet no one had discovered anything about these episodes save a ridiculous innocence.

Diego Carbonell was the chief expounder of the new hypothesis.

"There was more in it," he said. "It was more serious. They were discovered!"

He then proceeded to elaborate, psychologically.

"Under the cover of his scientific attainments and enthusiasms, we have, *señores*, in our good Doctor, something of a profounder influence, more fundamental, more strong. In other words, I see him now as a passionate sentimentalist! Ah? We never guessed it before! The old fellow must have been in love with his wife!"

They laughed; they appreciated Carbonell and each gave his attention.

"Yes, in our experience that seems impossible, but to a passionate sentimentalist it is not. That is a quality that makes a man capable of any folly; age does not diminish it. He was sentimental: he was in love with his wife. Understand his shocking disillusionment then! He was disillusioned forty years later than the rest of us, than the oldest of us—and directly. We acquired our scepticisms vicariously—through the betrayal of our friends. Think what a greater blow it was to him!"

"He needed some support. His science had nothing to offer him—the knife went to something more fundamental than his science. Ah? What do we have then? A result very familiar in such a soul, a going back to

the fold, a return to the church, the comfort of mysticism—the promise of the hereafter."

This was expressed with Carbonell's fantastic eloquence, yet it seemed none the less an excellent piece of psychological reasoning.

His opinion gained numbers of adherents. But it did not satisfy entirely.

There was a certain mystery unexplained. To the elucidation of this Dr. Hernandez, an unapproachable man, offered nothing.

III

HE was one who had acquired a scientific enthusiasm while he was still a boy, carried it with him through his studies in the University, gone abroad, worked on problems of embryology with Ernst Haeckel and returned to occupy the chair that he had made illustrious for the remainder of his career.

He had opposed the clergy very soon after the beginning of his professorship. His attacks met with a determined rebuttal; they attempted to remove him; he was too strong.

During these years he approached science with an almost religious attitude, but a delightfully intimate one, like the priest of an ancient god, the spokesman of an oracle, who was, in a way, the interpreter of his deity. His published works became more numerous; his position more secure.

There was no subsidence of his enthusiasm for many years. Then, growing older, certain questioning doubts assailed him.

He acquired, through the protracted experience of living, a glimmering sense of futility—even the futility of his own especial labors. Little by little he reached what might have been called the climacteric of his enthusiasm.

For many months he did not realize this declination of his faith and purpose; it came by so gradual a process. He lectured daily, as before. He expounded the old facts. He directed

work in the laboratories. He went home in the evening and was bored by his wife.

Then, someone sent him a surprising anonymous letter.

It must have come from a political enemy of Olavaria Matos, for it pointed out the flirtation of that man and the Doctor's wife.

Hernandez was startled; he seemed to come suddenly out of one world and into another.

He received the letter early one morning at the University and later, instead of going to the laboratory, he walked out, over to the street of San Juan, down toward the Avenida, looking about him with puzzled and somewhat wondering eyes.

It appeared to him that a new and even astonishing spectacle was unfolding itself. Men passed him, women passed him—where were they going? A young fellow emerged from a café, smiling, whistling loudly, vital with some unknown, inner pleasure. At the window of one of the houses, framed like a dusk gem in the dim square, a girl was smiling behind a fan. An automobile rushed by, driven rapidly to an unknown goal. A policeman, gaudy with brass buttons, loitered at the corner.

The multitudinous and unfathomable spectacle of life was there unfolding, on this street, to eyes that had somehow never seen it before. Dr. Hernandez began to frown.

Life had eluded him; it had gone on about him unheeded, while his pre-occupations kept him from its elucidation and from the fascination of its sudden events.

He felt strangely insecure; the certitude of his exact knowledge was ineffectual for the understanding of this single, sunlit street.

Then he thought of his wife; he thought of Olavaria Matos. A great astonishment possessed his mind. He recalled his wife's face, her plump figure, the face and figure familiar to him for so many years.

And in that instant he doubted his

familiarity and he saw her as a stranger, possessed of unknown wantings, moved by strange urges, actuated by unguessed desires.

His eyes widened; he stared in front of him with an expression of excitement.

She was making love to Olavaria Matos! Astonishing! That would involve him; it would bring him curious interests, unexpected episodes. His wife seemed to live anew, a fresh woman, an astounding personality.

At the next corner he took the street car and rode the rest of the way to the Avenida.

Stepping out, he walked rapidly toward his house, near the Convent College. In front of the straight wall of grey bricks he paused, looked up at the windows, squinted at the roof, glanced down at the pavement, as if he expected a sudden phenomenon to find an enactment, in some curious manner, from these familiar commonplaces. Then he approached the door and went in.

He passed through the hall and into the court; his wife was seated there, alone, busied with some embroideries. At his approach she glanced up, but did not greet him.

For some minutes he stood looking at her, examining her with wonder.

Her face was changed; the contours of her person were changed; she was mysterious.

His heart beat a little faster. He drew closer and sat down in a wicker chair near her own.

"Gloria," he said, "tell me the truth about yourself."

She raised her eyes and met his own with an uncomprehending gaze.

"What are you talking about?" she asked.

"So you are romantic!" he exclaimed, his voice expressing a profound wonder. "I never knew you! You have escaped me! All these years; think of it!"

He paused and then went on, half to himself, in a tone of detachment.

"It seems to me," he said, "that I have missed the study of things more

fundamental than any of those concerns that have occupied me so long. Do you understand? It doesn't matter; what I have missed is the comprehension of life itself. There is mystery, there is excitement, there is a certain deep fascination; my eyes have been closed. I have concerned myself with futilities. Gloria, who could have convinced me before that I did not know you? Ha! I am an old man, full of stupidities! You, yourself, eluded me! Tell me everything; I won't oppose you. . . ."

Now she was staring at him, frowning, uncomprehending, and considerably startled.

"Olavaria Matos!" he exclaimed. "He is a shadow to me; a face only. You are all shadows! Explain him to me, explain yourself. What do you feel for each other? How do you—"

She stood up abruptly; the embroideries dropped out of her hands. A deep flush ascended her cheeks, spread over her forehead, lost itself in her jetty hair. She drew in her breath in little gasps.

"What do you mean!" she cried. "Has someone been filling you with abominable foolishness? Are you going to be jealous now, old man? Am I a little one; have I just graduated from the convent—do you intend to watch me now and prevent me from speaking to a gentleman? Well, *hombre*, I am astonished!"

She gave the laces at her feet a savage kick and glaring at him an instant, walked rapidly toward the house. He remained seated, turned his head and followed her vanishing figure and then, dropping his eyes, stared at the grass.

A sudden depression seemed to envelope him, a weariness, an immeasurable boredom. It had all been false! His wife was as he had always supposed; she held no glamorous mystery; she was the woman who had bored him for years.

Gazing down morosely at the grass, his whole life presented itself as an intolerable triviality. It was dry, it was like the dust of the earth. The

romance of mystery had escaped him. How terrible that his wife was faithful!

An angry emotion filled his senses. His wife, and all that surrounded her, were devoid of interest, commonplace, infernally ordinary.

He stood up, glared at the house, and walked toward the door with slow, grinding steps. He wanted to destroy something, bring about some sudden catastrophe.

His feet carried him through the hall again and out of the house; he found himself returning to the University. Once more he took the car, alighting at the plaza. The familiar buildings met his eye, the grounds of the University, the long palace of the archbishop, the Panderia, the Capitol, the cathedral. At that misshapen edifice he stared absently.

Men and women were going in and out. It was Good Thursday; with a sardonic smile he recollected that on this day, the one day of the year, a little block of wheaten bread, representing the Host, was there on the altar, protected by glass, surmounted by gold.

Two young girls emerged, crossing themselves.

He turned, and was about to walk down toward the University. Then, it came to him, as a necessary query: What was he going back to? Nothing! Intolerably futile facts.

He saw a student from one of his classes entering the cathedral—

At that moment he saw his science, as often he had seen it before in the years of his enthusiasm, almost as a personality, an embodied thing. But now the figure stood before him grotesquely, amorphous, with empty hands. Some impulse made him turn once more and look toward the ugly, bulging columns of the cathedral.

Dim memories of its interior entered his mind. His nostrils inhaled the forgotten scent of heavy incense. He saw the long, cool nave, dim, approaching the grand altar. He recalled the numerous niches, wherein were found the figures of the blessed saints.

Scarcely comprehending his impulse, he crossed the plaza, approached the cathedral. It drew him, with the enticement of mystery itself, with the vague, irresistible promise of the unknown. And in this instant a sardonic idea entered his mind. The personification of his science was strong in his senses; now he would flaunt it!

He passed through the arched door, up the long aisle, kneeled with the others at the altar. He thrilled with the consciousness of astounding adventure. He began to pray, and the unreasoning words, the flout of fact, assuaged his spirit like a balm.

IV

WHEN he left the cathedral his mind was active with mingled feelings of vague satisfaction and sardonic amusement. Somehow, in these motions before the Host, he had approached a desirable mystery and felt something of those indefinite, confused emotions that his mind had rejected for years. On the other hand, he believed that he had achieved some sort of revenge. He had flaunted and made the denial of his accustomed faiths. He experienced some of the excitement of an apostate.

During his lecture next day he saw in the faces of his pupils their knowledge of his escapade, expressed in their wondering glances, their fixed stares of curiosity; that pleased him. In a measure, he was young again; life was charged with curious promises.

Shortly after his lecture he met the archbishop, who had come to the University looking for him.

They shook hands cordially; they smiled at each other.

"I'm delighted," said the old prelate. "You have come back to us!"

"Yes," agreed Hernandez.

He smiled an inward as well as an outward smile.

The old man in front of him, full of commingled cunning and simplicity, and withal venerable in his office, was an agreeable personality for the Doctor's speculations. It was astonishing

that they should be shaking hands, and conversing amicably. They had been enemies for years! Luckily for him, before it was too late, he had discovered the charming and incalculable possibilities of life, that made friends of enemies, and, it might well enough happen, enemies of friends. It seemed to Dr. Hernandez that all events were acceptable; all were mysterious.

He returned the call of the archbishop; they dined together; he found pleasure in accepting all the doctrines that came from the lips of the old prelate during their many conversations.

For a short time his interest in his wife returned. Perhaps she had lied to him; perhaps she had fooled him! He saw possibilities of interest in everyone, even in his wife. Suppose there was really an affair between her and Olavaria Matos: how pleasant it would be to surprise them with discovery! He began to look at his wife as at some uncomprehended phenomenon, abounding with obscure potentialities. In a measure, she fascinated him.

He used to appear in the house suddenly, at odd hours; she was always alone.

He bribed the servants and like a conspirator learned her programmes for different days; he followed her; she did nothing significant.

With smiling cunning he arranged that she should attend social affairs to which he knew Olavaria Matos had already been invited; they were never more than ordinarily polite to each other. He felt that they eluded him and his interest was still keen.

One day he met Olavaria Matos on the street. Dr. Hernandez beckoned him; they drew near each other and shook hands. After a few ordinary remarks, the Doctor, smiling inscrutably, looked directly into the Cabinet minister's face and put him a surprising question.

"Tell me, *señor*," he said, "what attraction do you find in my wife?"

Olavaria Matos stiffened a little, looked surprised, elevated his dark eyebrows and said rather coldly:

"I don't understand you, *Señor Doctor*."

"I mean, what is there between you and her?"

Hernandez spoke with the simplicity of a child.

After a moment the minister began to smile.

He put out his hand and let it fall genially upon the shoulder of his celebrated acquaintance.

"My dear *señor*," he said, "you flatter me with too much character. I am a very ordinary man. I have a family, and every night I go home to them. To tell you the truth, I've lost the assurance for the sort of adventure you credit me with. I've become old. I find myself desirous of safety. Really, I'm a very commonplace man!"

Hernandez believed him.

Again, his wife was a bore. He ceased to interest himself in her.

Meanwhile his mind, in the mystical concerns of prayer, in kneeling before the candled niches of the saints, in reflections upon inscrutable omnipotence, was evolving philosophies that had the warmth of young blood, and the content of a fireside hearth.

He admitted readily that in all his studies he had discovered no elucidation of those profounder problems, easier felt than shaped into words. He sensed, in the sky above him, in the air he breathed, upon the earth he trod, the presence of some assuaging, some fascinating, some illimitable power. He lost, little by little, his recently aroused interest in specific events; this man or that woman was no longer wonderful to him; they blended with a universal wonder.

At this time he apprehended, with an emotional thrill, a magnificent law of universal compensation, a benign law,

the assurance of omnipresent justice. He seemed to approach a Nirvana of content, to rest in the shadow of an immense security.

And also he awaited what might further happen in his life with a subdued, but profound, interest. Something would come to him; it would be good.

V

THE city was shocked, one day, to learn of the death of Dr. Ramon Hernandez. It came suddenly, a distressing accident. Late one afternoon he was crossing El Paraiso when he was struck by a large automobile driven by one of the attachés of a foreign legation.

The driver of the car was in no way at fault. Dr. Hernandez had crossed the street suddenly, with no regard to the traffic; he had stepped out from the curb with his eyes cast down, his countenance in the mould of deep contemplation. His death, luckily, had been immediate.

That day the Doctor had been charged with the emotions of his recent assurance and content. He was walking quietly, contemplating the eternal justice, his calm, his security. He saw nothing as he stepped into the street. He felt nothing, save the shattering, incredible surprise of a tremendous blow.

In a few years the memory of the man passed, together with the curious actions of his final year of life, but his work lived. His writings were published in a collected edition and remained, for a long period, the delight of those who turn from the evasive mysticism of religious doctrine to the straightforward assurance of scientific fact.



September

By Toni Harten-Hoencke

I DO not know of what these days remind me,
These fragrant-cool and clear September days;
Is it a joy that lies far-off behind me,
Yet finds me with its mild, caressing rays?

I breathe the strong and vivid life around me,
As through the woods and fields I shoreward go;
I am enrapt; no wonder would astound me—
And yet just what it is I do not know.

But of a sudden, as there spreads before me,
The moody sea, so deep and far and blue,
The glittering sounds below, the soaring gulls sheer o'er me,
Remembrance clears, and there is youth and you.

These to our first sweet happiness rebind me,
My dear, these golden-blue September days,
All time and space go vanishing behind me,
And love once more comes stealing through the haze.



FOOLS act as buffers to prevent wise men from getting the shocks.



PIN your faith on a woman, but keep a carbon copy.



TWO souls can seldom live as platonically as one.



Tea at the Ritz

By Michael Arlen

AFTER a long and tiring walk in the Park one December afternoon, I had turned into a church not a hundred miles from Berkeley Square. I was idly contemplating, when a woman walked up the aisle past me. She stood at the end of the aisle, very slim and erect and pathetic. . . .

I wondered lazily why she was there, for it seemed strange for a very beautiful and sad young woman to be in a church at half-past three on a December afternoon. She was not in mourning, and she was too young to regret a lover or husband deeply enough to seek consolation in religion; for I have heard that it is only when women have passed a certain age that they begin to enlist celestial aid in their love-affairs; up to then they can manage very nicely for themselves. And from her face one could guess nothing, for hers was that *chic* and oval type of face that might at any moment be painted by Mr. Ambrose McEvoy, if, indeed, his facile brush had not already painted and petted her. . . . And then, as she turned away, she made the sign of the cross.

It was the stealthiest and sincerest sign of the cross that I have ever seen even a woman make—sincerest in its pathos; and yet her face and carriage were so immobile and so unassailable that even the benign helpfulness of a saint would have seemed an impertinence. But I am not a saint, I am a man; and so, as she passed me on her way out and I vaguely saw two large gray eyes humid with the inarticulate tears that can make even a plain woman passably fair, I got up and followed her into Mount Street. It sounds bad, but the fact remains.

She walked quickly toward Berkeley Square. She was walking across it toward Bond Street, and I said to myself, "She is going into Bond Street, and there she will be lost and different, for she will lose her pathos and find a hat. If I am going to risk my good name as a gentleman, it must be now or never."

I was almost beside her, at the corner of Burton Street. Her profile was unapproachable. I took a very deep breath.

"If," I said, "I have the cheek to ask you to have tea with me, will you have the cheek to say 'yes'?"

The large gray eyes looked 'round at me, through me. She was too marvelous.

"Yes," she said.

"I saw you in the church, you see," I explained, trying to put the thing on a respectable basis. "And I simply couldn't get out of my head the idea that the situation called for tea."

"The Ritz seems indicated," she only said.

"Although anywhere would do," I remarked, "for all the tea-places will be empty, as there is a tram strike on the Brixton line."

* * *

As we sat down to tea in a far corner, she looked at me for the second time.

"I suppose you are a gentleman," she suggested gently.

"Well, I do try to imitate the few who are still good enough to know me in spite of my looks. . . . What else can one say?"

She poured the tea.

"We will continue our acquaintance with the distinct understanding, if you

don't mind, that it is *not* the thing to do to go about touting tea to defenseless young women in Berkeley Square. The fact that you first saw me in a church aggravates the offense."

"It was noticed that the accused felt his position very keenly," I murmured, contrite.

She was very serious, very beautiful.

"Shall I tell you a story about two young women?" she asked.

"I should love to hear that story."

She finished her *éclair* absent-mindedly.

"I do wish there were cream in these things instead of this custard stuff," she said petulantly. "Oh, yes! about that story. . . . Once upon a time there was a Clever Lady and a Stupid Lady. The Stupid Lady was rich, while the Clever Lady had only her credit and the family Téclas to fall back on. And she fell in love with a Rising Young Politician, who had a marvelous brain, going this way and that, like Clapham Junction. But he simply couldn't make up a good speech; he could do everything else but that. He got up in the House and said the dullest things in the most adorable voice. But all that was changed when the Clever Lady fell in love with him, for she took him in hand and wrote his speeches for him; and he memorized them, and soon began to make quite a little name for himself. But she couldn't do anything more for him, because she was quite poor, you see; although, indeed, he was perfectly sweet about the smallish landaulet she gave him, and

said that it was only vulgar people who had large cars. He was quite sweet about a lot of things, and the Clever Lady thought everything was going off lovely, until . . . there was a big debate booked for the House; all the star performers, the five-thousand-a-year ones, were engaged to appear, and it was the Rising Young Politician's one great chance—if he could only make up a speech! The Clever Lady stepped in, and on the day the R.Y.P. stood up and made the speech—it went off wonderfully! And the Stupid Lady was in the gallery listening, adoring. She insisted on meeting the R.Y.P., and made her mother give large dinner-parties and things for him. And soon the Clever Lady noticed a dropping off in the R.Y.P.'s visits, until he called no more, and she read in the papers that he was engaged to the Stupid Lady; which, indeed, he was—and finally they were married. . . . That's all."

She was looking into the distance, over my shoulder, and the large gray eyes were glistening miserably.

"And you—I'm so sorry," I said sincerely.

"Of course, he left politics," she murmured. "He couldn't make any more speeches."

"I wish I—I'm so sorry," I repeated gently.

She picked up her bag and gloves to go, but the eyes she suddenly turned on me were full of inquiry.

"I'm the Stupid Lady, you see," she said.



TUNNEL—the shortest distance between two lips.



Le Vagabond

By Charles Dornier

L'il portait son bâton comme un sceptre et ses cinquante ans comme un léger bagage. De la force orgueilleuse se montrait par tous les trous de son vêtement. Son visage tanné par les soleils et les vents, quadrillé de rides, semblait une carte de maints pays traversés. Ses yeux étaient profonds d'avoir vu les aspects les plus divers du monde. Il s'avancait, roi de la route, où seul il passait droit, tandis qu'alentour les autres, courbés sur la glèbe, labouraient, sarclaient, fauchaient pour faire pousser le pain et le vin dont il prélèverait, au hasard, la dîme.

Ne possédant rien, rien ne l'avait possédé. Le foin du pré, l'ombre du talus étaient un lit toujours prêt à sa fatigue. La branche tendait son fruit à son désir, prunes d'ambre, pommes colorées comme des joues, noix lobées et blanches comme un crâne, et la source accourait, chantonnante, à sa soif. La fille errante, la pastour sauvage s'offraient ou se soumettaient à son étreinte de mâle robuste et hardi, et souvent des femmes, curieuses ou vicieuses, faisaient à son baiser anonyme l'aumône de leur corps. Comme les riches, il émigrail à chaque saison, passant l'hiver aux contrées du soleil et remontant avec les hirondelles. Il traversait les villes à la hâte, ayant la haine des murs et des rues étroites qui rétrécissent en leur lit de pierre le ciel et la lumière. Aux chiens il présentait son bâton, aux gendarmes ses papiers. Philosophe, il acceptait les abois, les questions, les refus, les injures, avec résignation, comme il courbait le dos sous l'averse.

Et voici que pour la première fois depuis sa jeunesse une émotion vague hâ-

tait sa marche et agitait sa pensée. Lui que le présent seul intéressait, il rêvait à son passé, car le hasard ramenait son vagabondage au pays même de sa naissance. Ces côteaux, cette rivière qui n'avaient point bougé étaient des témoins anciens, des reproches à l'éternel errant. Ce clocher, bras levé sur les maisons du village, lui faisait un geste d'appel, semblait la houlette d'un berger guettant le retour d'une brebis égarée.

Trente ans déjà ont coulé depuis qu'il s'est enfui, pris de haine et épris d'aventure. Et il se rappelle sa jeunesse dans la vieille maison dont il aperçoit maintenant le toit bas, la grange haute. Seul, le noyer du seuil, énorme, a grandi, cachant la moitié de la façade.

Il était l'aîné. Son cadet était aussi chétif que lui-même brillait de force, et, par un bizarre partage, tandis qu'à l'avorton allaient les tâches faciles, la meilleure pitance, les habits neufs, à lui furent réservés le réveil brutal, le lourd outil, le pain sec et les hardes ; aux mauvais traitements, son corps et son cœur s'endurcirent. Il devint fort et brutal. A vingt ans il aima une jolie voisine, la Jeannette, mais celle-ci préféra la peau blanche, la gentillesse frêle et câline de son frère, à son visage hâlé, à sa lourde carrure. Alors se sentant incapable de supporter plus longtemps, sans faire un malheur, la vue de cet injuste bonheur, il avait pris une poignée d'écus dans l'armoire et, une nuit, il avait suivi, dans sa roulotte, une jeune bohémienne rencontrée le matin, entre les blés, abandonnant à jamais ses devoirs et ses droits, parents et patrimoine.

Qu'allait-il retrouver dans la maison, là-bas ? Sans doute, un paysan épuisé

de travail et de privations, une femme vieillie et des enfants chétifs, comme le père. Songeait-on encore à lui? Non. On devait le mépriser. Qui d'ailleurs pourrait reconnaître, en ce grand diable hirsute, Pierre Michaud, le gars de char-rue imberbe qu'il était il y a vingt ans?

Il approche; à la fontaine, en face de la mesure natale, deux enfants jouent avec une seringue creusée dans un bout de sureau. Le vagabond s'arrête. En deux lampées, il étanche une soif simulée et, s'adressant au plus âgé des gamins:

— Qui reste à la maison d'en face?

— C'est mon papa.

— Tu t'appelles Michaud, alors?

— Oui, Paul Michaud.

— Et celui-ci?

— C'est Emile, mon frère.

— En as-tu d'autres?

— J'ai aussi une grande sœur.

Pierre cherche à retrouver les traits de famille sur ces figures barbouillées de gamins qui auraient pu être ses fils. Et il continue l'interrogatoire:

— A-t-il beaucoup de bêtes, ton papa?

— Deux vaches.

— Et des bœufs?

— Non, on attelle les vaches.

Sans doute, le frerot n'a guère prospéré, aussi faible d'initiative que de corps, pour n'avoir pas à la fin de ses

jours sa paire de bêtes de travail. D'ailleurs, la maison qu'il voit de près est d'aspect délabré.

Une femme se montre sur le seuil, inspecte d'un air sournois, et se retourne, parlant à l'intérieur.

Pierre reconnaît la Jeannette, édentée et blanche. Quoi! c'est là ce qui reste de celle qui lui semblait jadis résumer toute la joie du monde! Mais voici que derrière elle sort le mari: le frère de Pierre, maigre et cassé. Ses yeux méfiants dévisagent le vagabond, et sa voix menaçante rappelle les enfants. Pierre pense un instant à les aborder. Sans doute, ils lui refuseraient la charité, à lui qui pourrait en se nommant exiger, divine vengeance, la moitié de ce pauvre bien, son dû.

Il marche sur le groupe qui recule derrière sa porte en grommelant quelque insulte. Alors il hausse les épaules. Décidément, ces gens sont pour lui des étrangers. Qu'ils gardent leur mince pécule, leurs gros soucis, leur grande misère. Il a, lui, la meilleure part: la route et la vie libres, les horizons larges et toujours nouveaux, les aubaines de l'instant sans nul soin de l'avenir, et ce soir, en s'endormant au creux d'une meule, sous le ciel croulant d'étoiles, il rêvera que pour lui, là-haut, de la corne de la Lune, ruisselle une avalanche d'or.



THE most invaluable asset to a man of many loves is a poor widowed mother to support.



A POET is just a person who talks beautifully about the weather.



A Correspondence Course in Theatrical Business

By George Jean Nathan

I

LIKE Wilde, my own business always bores me to death; I prefer other people's. This accounts, perhaps, for the time that I should today be devoting to the magazine business but which I am devoting instead to the theatrical managers' business. If, when I have finished telling the managers about their own business, they should abruptly turn on me and ask me, if I know so much about business, why I am not myself a millionaire magazine publisher—like Hearst, say — I shall therefore simply have to look as much like a goat as possible and attempt to divert attention from myself by galloping up to the nearest bill-board and eating off a three-sheet of the "Greenwich Village Follies."

As I have said, however, it is the theatrical managers' business that presently interests me, so there is nothing for me to do but to preserve my peace of mind by concerning myself with it. Thus concerning myself, I find that the managers seem to know very little about their business. They currently bewail the financial straits that they are in, attributing their condition to the extraordinary badness of the theatrical season when the badness or goodness of the theatrical season has infinitely less to do with it all than their own unfitness as theatrical business men. Time and again, of course, I have proved (to my own satisfaction) that the trouble with our commercial managers is that they are not commercial

enough. A proficient commercial manager is not to be sniffed at. He is not always the mere low merchant that such simon-pure artists as myself (who have been careful to make a comfortable sum out of Union Pacific preferred, Standard Oil of New Jersey and United States Steel, to say nothing of the popular magazine business) are in the lofty habit of proclaiming. Very often, one will find him something of an artist himself—a fellow like Martersteig or Jessner in Germany, or Gémier or Gavault in France, or—if we may take in the music show field—our American Ziegfeld. Incidentally, about as proficient commercial managers as we have in America at the moment are the artistic boys and girls who are operating the Theatre Guild. But the commercial theatrical manager who isn't even commercial is a sorry figure. He not only does not arouse one's admiration by putting on good plays and failing with them, but he arouses one's complete disgust by putting on bad plays and failing with them. He is neither an artist nor a business man. He is simply a hanswurst.

Worse still, there is apparently no intelligible reason why he should fail to do the very thing which he sets out to do. If he wishes to make money with the plays he produces—art or no art; if turning a profit instead of, as at present, a heavy loss, is his one aim; if he is not in the business for his health, as he is fond of putting it to the man from whom he is trying to borrow money—if this is the situation

with him, then his course is an easy one. The man who desired to make a great deal of money out of odd pieces of furniture and who laid in his entire stock from Grand Rapids without paying any attention to the Italian, Spanish and other sources of supply would be set down, even by Mr. Butler Davenport, as a mule. But when a theatrical manager does the very same thing and finds himself subsequently three blocks nearer to the poor-house, he seeks to hide his dunderheadedness in the old saw to the effect that it is impossible to tell in advance what the public will like. Now, while it is true that one cannot always tell in advance just what the public will like, it is not true that one need constantly fail in telling in advance just what the public will like. A fairly competent magazine editor succeeds nine times in ten in anticipating the taste of the public; if he did not, his magazine would lose money every third month, and presently go to smash altogether. Yet there are scores of periodicals that figure out the public taste with more or less accuracy month by month. And the same thing holds true of hatters, modistes, soft drink impresarios, book publishers, politicians, manufacturers of ready-made clothing, lecture managers and numerous others. Or, if it is not true that one need not constantly fail in deciphering the public's taste, it is at least true that the theatrical managers might give themselves a better run for their investments than they currently vouchsafe themselves. Surely, no business man who knew the least about the theatre would for a moment argue that Mr. George Broadhurst, for example, would not have stood a much better chance of achieving wampum with some such available play as Molnar's "Counsel for the Defence" ("Der Herr Verteidiger") or Stifter's "Don't Write Letters" ("Man Soll Keine Briefe Schreiben") than with his prompt and readily foreseen failure, "The Elton Case." The three plays fall into approximately the same box-office groove; none of the three is a good

play; each costs the same amount of money to cast and produce. Yet, though none of the three is a good play, the money-making odds are surely on the two first named. They might fail, true enough, but their failure is less certain than was the failure of the play that Mr. Broadhurst presented.

Take a number of other cases. Who but an altruistic commercial manager like Mr. Richard Herndon would have lost money on a certain failure such as the antiquated "Skylark" when he might at least have stood a good chance of pecuniary gain with such an easily accessible play as Hermann Bahr's "The Moment," which—save in the matter of merit—is from a dramatic point of view apparently what Mr. Herndon was trying to find in "The Skylark," and which would not have cost one cent more to produce? Pass on to Mr. William A. Brady, who is seemingly determined to lose money. In quick succession, Mons. Brady lost his remaining two shirts on two absolutely impossible box-office pieces: "The Teaser" and "Personality." If it is true that one cannot foretell a play's chances from a reading of the manuscript, it is not true that one could not have foretold the lack of chances of this brace of plays from a reading of the manuscripts. Neither stood the slightest chance of making a cent—save as subsequent motion pictures, and motion picture sales at the moment are very poor gambles. But had M. Brady substituted for "The Teaser" such a play as an adaptation of Sacha Guitry's "Wife, Husband and Lover" (it would have fitted into the same managerial pigeon-hole), and for "Personality" such a play as Otto's "The Last Adventure of Don Juan," which has been hawked around town for the last ten years, his losses would by no means have been so certain. These plays might also fail, but it is extremely unlikely that they would fail as disastrously as the twain which the producer exhibited.

The Selwyns' failure with Mr. George V. Hobart's "Sonny" is understandable. It was no worse than Mr.

George V. Hobart's "Buddies" which made money last season; it was, indeed, much the same species of hokum; and a commercial manager was justified in taking a chance with it. But what of "The Poppy God"? It has been known among book publishers and magazine editors that, so far as the American public is concerned, the Chinese story is, at least for the present, as dead as a door-nail. The last book of Chinese fiction put on the market sold, at last accounting, just two hundred and three copies. Had the Messrs. Selwyn remembered this, and produced instead—and for one-third the money—such a play as Molnar's "The Swan," or the American Lillith Benda's "Judy" (though it needs a measure of re-writing, but is worth the trouble), or Eugene O'Neill's "The Ole Davil" (which they read and turned down), or the French "A Weak Woman" (which they might have obtained from Mr. Belasco who will doubtless never present it), the odds on financial success would undeniably have been at least three times as large.

To pursue our interference in other people's business, take the case of the Shuberts and "The Triumph of X." As I pointed out last month, this play was so much like an instantaneous failure of some years ago that was produced by their partner in the present venture, that its failure, in turn, called for no particularly sleuthy clairvoyant. It was doomed commercially before the first curtain rose upon it. The Shuberts have a half dozen more promising commercial plays of European origin in their possession, already bought and paid for. Any of these might have been more profitably speculated upon. Or they might have produced, with more reasonable expectation of financial return, such a readily available play as the amusing Imre Földes comedy that has been going the rounds of the managers' offices for the past eight months, or the not especially noteworthy, but diverting, "One Can't Always Say No" of George Prinz, or—what would seem to be a sure thing—the sensational

"Lysistrata" of Maurice Donnay. (This last would have cost considerably more to produce, and is therefore perhaps not an entirely relevant suggestion.)

Had Marc Klaw substituted for the obsolete "Sonya" an equally mediocre play called "The Morals of Madame Dolska," by the same Polish author, he would perhaps have made more money than he did make, for, though the second play is artistically no better than the first, it is theatrically less mildewed. Surely Mr. Dillingham would have made at least all the money he lost on the belated farce-comedy, "The Scarlet Man," with the fresher farce-comedy (to be obtained at the nearest play-broker's), "Father Was Right," by the younger Guitry. And the producers of "Nobody's Money," a farce-comedy almost as antiquated as "The Scarlet Man," might have gambled with much more obvious chance of monetary success on the vastly more spick and plainly more promising box-office farce-comedy by Louis Verneuil, "Pour Avoir Adrienne."

Mr. Broadhurst's loss of money on "Tarzan of the Apes," which closed almost as soon as it opened, I can sympathize with. Here, apparently, was a fair chance to turn a nifty penny. The "Tarzan" piffle has, for the last five years, been listed high in best-selling drug-store fiction, and apparently seemed good material for yokel box-office purposes. Its failure as a play must be blamed upon something other than bad commercial judgment. The Shuberts' losses on "March Hares" do not come into the present argument: the play in point is a good play and could not have been produced with a single eye to the box-office. The question of merit entered here. But in the case of the production of "The Blue Lagoon," business acumen was lacking. The circumstance that the play ran for an entire year in London surely should not have deluded its local sponsors. To anyone as conversant with London theatrical traditions as the Messrs. Shubert, it should have been plain that, for all its British success, the play was

no more New York box-office material than "Alsace," the great Paris success, or Hasenklever's "Adam, Eve and the Serpent," the big Berlin success, is New York box-office material. "The Blue Lagoon"—although I confess that it is difficult exactly to figure out why—is essentially the stuff of the popular British theatre, a theatre greatly inferior to our own. The American popular theatre demands more ingenious material than this; the motion pictures have killed such kindergarten spectacles; a spectacular production in the New York theatre must out-spectacle a London spectacle three-fold if it would make money. The Messrs. Shubert might therefore have achieved a somewhat better speculation with the much less expensive "Les Petites Curieuses" of Tristan Bernard, or Donnay's witty "La Chasse à l'Homme," or—if they believed "The Blue Lagoon" a theatrical novelty and wished novelty above everything else—the extremely novel "Power" of August Stramm, which Reinhardt did last year in the *Kammerspiel*. This last named play might have lost as much money as the play they produced, but the gambling chance on success would assuredly have been two to one. This, the more so, as the expense of producing the second play would be negligible.

Mr. Pemberton, who produced the pseudo-poetical "Swords," has printed an expensive advertisement in the daily journals announcing himself a showman first, and an artistic producer third, or fourth. As a showman—and also as an artistic producer—he might have better vindicated himself, and his portemonnaie, by doing Sologub's poetic variation of the theme of Schönherr's "Weibsteufel," or de Bouhélier's "The Life of a Woman," or Manuel Rivas' Galician tragedy, "Cristobalón," a play which, at its worst—and indeed it has a worst—is greatly superior to "Swords" on every theatrical and literary count. Or, if none of these appealed to him, such a poetic work as Scholz's "The Guest."

And so with other of our facetiously

uncommercial producing managers. These gentlemen seem grimly determined not to make money. They take chances with their investments that no Texas chambermaid, harking to the blandishments of a traveling oil-stock salesman, would think of taking. They throw their money away on "Wait Till We're Married" and "The Man in the Making" when they might at worst save at least part of it on Alexander Hajo's "Lackeys" or Frank Layton's Manchester satiric comedy, "The Parish Pump." They dump it into the bottomless well of obsolete melodrama, dully suggestive booboisie farces and flat comedy when all the while, and close at hand, are such interesting things and such potential money-makers as the much talked of "L'Ecole des Cocottes," Guitry's highly comical "Illusionist," Wedekind's sensational "Pandora's Box," Gysae's mocking comedy, "The Elite," Porto-Riche's familiar "The Old Adam" (if it were carefully cast), Adolph Paul's "Tobacco Smoke," Dunsany's fantasy, "If," Lady Gregory's "The Dragon," Rittner's "En Route," and an elaboration of Tom Barry's amusing local vaudeville playlet, "Nick Carter." . . . This deliberate avoidance of money-making on the part of our theatrical mis-managers has always been as much of a mystery to me as the line in all the programs which reads, "Mason and Hamlin organ used in this theatre," when eighteen years of indefatigable theatre-going on my part have failed to divulge a New York legitimate theatre that has in it an organ of any kind, save one of smell.

II

FOR a long time now I have observed that whenever a play by dramatists like de Caillavet and de Flers opens on the same evening as a play by a dramatist like William Hodge, all the amiable critical jackasses who are in the habit of taking me to derisory task for writing of foreign plays at the expense of American go kit and caboodle to the latter. Play-reviewing in New York is

conducted in such instances not upon by the dramatist's degree of eminence, nor upon a more or less soundly anticipated premise of merit, but upon the degree of elaborateness of the theatre building in which the play is to be given, the standing of the star in the Sixty Club, and the size of the yearly advertising revenue from the producer. If a novice like Henry Baron, say, were to present Gerhart Hauptmann's latest drama in the Sixty-Third Street Theatre on the same night that one of the old-line managers were to present Jane Cowl in a play by Roi Cooper Megrue in the new National, the only New York newspaper reviewer who would go to the former would be Dr. J. Ranken Towse, and he doubtless wouldn't know what the play was about anyway. To ask a New York reviewer to go to the out-of-the-way and obscure little Punch and Judy Theatre to see a play by the most eminent collaborators in France since the day of Meilhac and Halévy when he might go the same evening to see a play about two crooks by a writer for the *Saturday Evening Post* in a theatre in the mid-stream of Broadway, is to ask for the moon.

Yet such a play as "L'Eventail" ("The Fan") is, for all the fourteen years that have elapsed since it was written, worth three-quarters of the present-day comedies that a Broadway season uncovers. One of the weakest of the Caillavet-Flers pieces, it is still periodically rich in characterization, in drollery, in butterfly philosophy and in its surgery upon the human heart. It is the uncommon type of play in which, when one person exclaims of another, "He's a character!", the dramatist has made certain of the truth of the ejaculation instead of merely writing into the script, adjoining the "character's" name, some such line as "middle-aged, well-dressed man with gray moustache and purple spats." Unfortunately, the local revealment of the play in the Punch and Judy Theatre was entrusted to so ignoble a troupe of mummers that hardly any of its virtues survived the criminal assault. The rôle of Gizelle was played

Miss Hilda Spong, for instance, as if the super-coquette were Miss Katherine Kidder's grandmother; and the rôle of the lover, François, by an obstreperous Stein-Bloch model with as much finish as the beginning of a six-day bicycle race.

III

AFTER I have read the newspaper advertisements of Mr. John Golden, it is all that I can do to argue myself into going to see his presentations. Take, for example, his latest production, "Thank You." This is what I read: "John Golden Will Thank You to See 'Thank You'"; "John Golden Says 'Thank You' on Monday Evening at the Longacre Theatre"; "John Golden Loves You and Whispers 'Thank You'"; "John Golden Had a Good Dinner Last Night at Browne's Chop House and Wishes to 'Thank You'"; "John Golden Is Happy His Wife Adores Him and Is Thankful to 'Thank You'"; etc. . . . I am not certain that I have quoted the advertisements exactly, but this is the way I remember them. How Mr. Golden can expect a critic to approach any play so advertised without feeling shamefaced and turning up his coat collar, I don't know.

This latest production of his is the work of Thomas Cushing and Winchell Smith, and is still another attempt to make money out of the eight-o'clock-rags and eleven-o'clock-royal-raiment hokum.

IV

FOR sixteen years, the estimable Mr. Adolph Klauber wrote dramatic criticism for the pages of the New York *Times* in which, with high and commendable integrity of purpose, he berated all managerial cheapness and combatted with zeal and fire all shoddy drama that corrupted the honour of the stage. Gimcrack sex farce, inane comedy and box-office Wallingford play—each and all received from him their merited rebuke. Since becoming a manager, Mr. Klauber has produced three

plays: (1) "Nightie Night," a gimcrack sex farce, (2) "Scrambled Wives," an inane comedy; and (3) "Like A King," a box-office Wallingford play.

Moral: It's only the poor fish in the sea who knows how cold the water is.

"Like A King," the latest Klauber art work, is the labour of John Hunter Booth. It is No. 1256 in the eight o'clock down-and-out and eleven o'clock up-and-in series. And it will not make Mr. Klauber one-hundredth the money that a critically more respectable piece of dramatic writing like Robert Dieu-donné's "Le Crampon" would make for him.

V

"It is in the loss of its satirical and critical character that the play loses its identity with Sinclair Lewis' work. The small town folk of Mr. Sinclair when they are about their business on the stage are not unlike the same sort of folk that Mr. Cohan or Winchell Smith may put on view . . . 'Main Street' as a drama should be seen by all who read and liked the book."

Thus does my good friend Mons. Reamer, of the *Herald*, achieve—in the face of amazingly strong competition on the part of his colleagues—the grand prize, a small plaster statuette of General Foch, which I offer annually out of my own purse to the reviewer whose daily prudent *non sequitur*, designed for letting down managerial indignation, shall be the most uliginous. For the theory that everyone who has liked a novel should see a dramatization of the novel from which the chief virtues of the novel have been carefully deleted is a philosophy so fresh and juicy that it is not meet it should go unrewarded. There is far too little original thinking in American dramatic criticism as it is.

What results from Harvey O'Higgins' and Harriet Ford's dramatization of Sinclair's book is, in the main, a Charles H. Hoyt farce directed and played in the somewhat straighter vein of comedy. Invest Doc Kennicott, Erik Valborg and Carol Kennicott with the punning nomenclature affected by

Hoyt, and you have in this theatrical "Main Street" a play in genre somewhere between "A Midnight Bell" and "A Temperance Town." The dramatists had a hard job before them, it is true; to make a faithful play out of the highly detailed Sinclair novel was no easy order. And their failure is not so much theirs as the non-conformity of the novel itself to stage purposes. Their first act, and the second portion of their second act, are not badly handled. In these sections of their dramatization they have salvaged for the stage a measure of the observant sauce of the novel. But the balance of their work is a grotesque distortion—and a wholly unnecessary distortion, at that—of the characters and action of the novel for purposes of theatrical hokum. In a word, the playwrights have centred their efforts not upon dramatizing the quiet virtues of the novel, but its blatant machinery. The result—the backdrop painted to the contrary—is not "Main Street," but "Broadway." Miss Alma Tell acts the rôle of Carol (with heavy emphasis on the verb) as a kind of melodramatic Dulcy. Mr. McKay Morris is much better as Kennicott, although he lacks the simplicity that the character calls for. Mr. Norman Keedwell plays the young rustic, Valborg, with the speech, manner and wearing apparel of a member of the Harvard Hasty Pudding Club.

VI

MR. WILLIAM HODGE's new play, designed for his own use, is "Beware of Dogs." Mr. William Hodge's previous plays, designed for his own use, were—it may relevantly be recalled—"The Road to Happiness," "A Cure for Curables" and "The Guest of Honor."

VII

"LILIES OF THE FIELD" was—Branch 6, Section G, of the American department of the Wilhelmstrasse informs me—written by Mr. William Hurlbut to fit the personality of Miss Jobyna How-

land as that personality was revealed in "The Gold Diggers." Miss Howland said nay to both the rôle and the play and the rôle sought its artiste elsewhere. This rôle, well handled by Miss Josephine Drake, is written with both humour and observation, as are the several minor demi-mondaine rôles that figure in the manuscript. But the play that surrounds these rôles is hack stuff of a cheap and eminently sour order, the sort of thing that one used to encounter in the gaudy novels that made up Street and Smith's New Eagle Series, the *opera*, to wit, of Mrs. Georgie Sheldon, Mrs. Alex. McVeigh Miller and other such purveyors to the literary tastes of Swedish servant girls and of the ladies of Middle Western Browning Societies when they got their corsets off. Miss Marie Doro and Mr. Norman Trevor are the wrongfully accused wife and chivalrous lover of this particular variation of "Audrey's Repentance, or Her Heart's Unbidden Guest" and "Marcia Drayton's Fate, or the Heiress of Beaufort Park." Miss Doro brings a sympathetic prettiness to a rôle not worth playing, and Mr. Trevor reads his most banal lines so sincerely and effectively that one concludes he must be happily unaware of their imbecility.

VIII

MUSIC SHOWS. "The Music Box Revue" is an extremely elaborate entertainment whose best features are three amusing burlesques very well executed by Willie Collier, Sam Bernard and Miss Florence Moore, and whose weakest are its music and girls. "Bombo" is Al Jolson, the best singing comique on the American tune stage. "The Love Letter" is a feeble tune version of Molnar's "Fable of the Wolf." "The O'Brien Girl" is a very lively dancing show directed by the magical George M. Cohan. "Love Dreams" is the usual thing, without ingenuity. And "Blossom Time," with its score derived from the songs of Franz Schubert, is obviously the best ear, if not eye, show on Broadway.

IX

"AMBUSH," by Arthur Richman, is an honest play honestly written. It presents an uncompromising picture of a pinched, dun New Jersey household with its father vainly fighting the battle of his pride against its daughter in scarlet revolt. As a piece of realistic writing, it is one of the most interesting contributions made to the American theatre by a native playwright in recent years. It is well staged by the Theatre Guild and fairly well interpreted. "The Wren" is still another theatrical effort by the otherwise talented Booth Tarkington that will doubtless be followed by the author's usual letters to the public press contending that, if the critics were not all idiots, the great virtues of the play would not be overlooked, as they have been. For all the author's whole-hearted critical tributes to himself, however, the play will probably remain the extremely weak little thing it is: a pallid vehicle manufactured for Miss Helen Hayes. Karl Schönherr's "Children's Tragedy," long familiar to readers of these pages, is a fine, eloquent and moving study of adolescent reaction to a mother's faithlessness, locally impaired by German beer-garden acting. "A Bill of Divorcement," by Clemence Dane, is a well-written but intrinsically banal semi-propaganda play on divorce and hereditary insanity in an Anglo-Brieux manner. Miss Katherine Cornell is the best member of a presenting company whose star, Mr. Allan Pollock, gives in the rôle of a shell-shock victim a truly superb, if alas somewhat irrelevant, performance as Gaspard in "The Chimes of Normandy." "The Demi-Virgin" is still another of Avery Hopwood's played-out dramatizations of Fabiano's illustrations in *La Vie Parisienne* with dialogue by Al Reeves. "The Claw," Henry Bernstein's drama of some years back, is bad Augier made lethal by a slobbery performance of the leading rôle by Lionel Barrymore. Miss Irene Fenwick's performance contributes to the occasion its one interesting note.

Variations on a Familiar Theme

By H. L. Mencken

§ 1

SEVERAL months ago, being in a low state of mind, I opened a book called "The Founding of New England," by James Truslow Adams (*Atlantic Monthly Press*), and made trial to read it. Two chapters—and I was asleep. Thereupon (after awaking) I composed a short notice of it for this place, denouncing it as dull, and hinting, if I remember rightly, that the author was probably a college professor of history, *i.e.*, a professional obscurantist and soporific. . . . It is a solemn duty and an austere pleasure now and hereby to withdraw that notice unconditionally, and to apologize in due form of law for having printed it. It was unjust, asinine, and without merit. Writing it and printing it, I sank to such low intellectual levels that it would have been a meet reward if I had been forthwith elected to a chair in Princeton or a seat in Congress. I apologize again, and pray the benefit of clergy. I have tackled the book a second time, and read it from end to end. It is a laborious, a comprehensive, a sagacious, and withal an extremely interesting piece of writing. There is no dulness in it. For the first time, indeed (save for Brooks Adams' brilliant volume), dulness and the subject are definitely divorced. And for the first time the history of the Yankee bluenose is delivered from superstition and delusion, and recited in a manner that convinces not only by its relentless documentation but also and more especially by its intrinsic plausibility. All of the old dark points are cleared up. For every

known effect a probable cause is brought forward; for every act a motive is offered; and so a new verisimilitude gets into what has been, for many years, a bald and unconvincing narrative, half saga and half bare fabrication.

I have often called attention to the astonishing badness of American historical writing. Most of it is done by university pedagogues with no comprehension of the matters they discuss, and a great fear of offending the national taboos; the rest is chiefly the product of such empty pedants as Henry Cabot Lodge. It was General George G. Meade, I believe, who refused absolutely, a few years after the Civil War, to write his memoirs of that struggle—on the ground that so many lies about its salient incidents were already in circulation that it would be hopeless to try to correct them. To this day there is no adequate history of the war, and no adequate critical biography of any of its great figures, save perhaps Lord (I forget his name)'s "Lincoln." Of Jackson there is a good account in the late William Graham Sumner's small volume. But has there been any decent life of Washington since Marshall's? Think of the puerility of Dr. Wilson's, so mercilessly exposed by William Bayard Hale! On the Revolution I can think of but one work that is neither full of historical gum-drops nor so dull that it can't be read, and that is Sidney George Fisher's "True Story"—a model of indefatigable research and persuasive exposition. To it now add this book by Mr. Adams. It stops just as the Fisher volume begins, and the two thus present a con-

nected, and, I believe, accurate picture of the causes which lay at the bottom of the controversy between Great Britain and the colonies. Adams, like Fisher, sees clearly that the accepted story—of a small band of heroic pioneers oppressed by tyrants three thousand miles away—is largely moonshine. There is even a good deal of blather in the more scientific theory that the Revolution was caused by irresistible economic movements—that it transcended all human volition, and was produced by statistics. Both Fisher and Adams show that quite familiar motives entered into it, all of them now brilliantly on display in Ireland, Poland, Lithuania, Egypt, India, and God knows where else—especially our old friend, the *Wille zur Macht*. The colonial nabobs, in brief, tired of being lowly colonials, and aspired to rule their own roost. Fisher shows this yearning in operation at the time of the actual Revolution. Adams shows its beginning in the unparalleled egomania and thirst for power of the Puritan oligarchs of New England. They quarreled with the divine right of the English crown, not because they questioned the theory supporting it, but because they had a superior fondness for a divine right of their own.

It is the fashion in our histories to credit these obscene fanatics with the inventio of most of the liberal institutions and ideas which enter into the American scheme of things (at least theoretically), and even to argue that they were responsible for the spread of such boons to England. Nothing could be more absurd. There is not a single right of the citizen of today, from free speech to equal suffrage and from religious freedom to trial by jury, that they did not oppose with all their ferocious might. They had no more respect for these things than a Wilson or a Palmer, and no more comprehension of them. Every step that was made toward free institutions was made against their will, and in the face of their most violent opposition. Like Wilson, true enough, they sometimes babbled hypocritically

about liberty, and they bawled raucously every time any liberty of their own was menaced, but like him again they were quite unable to grasp the concept represented by the word. The thing itself was established among them by their enemies—by the non-Puritan and anti-Puritan immigrants who came into New England despite their watchfulness, and resisted them with greater firmness and courage year after year, and finally overthrew them and destroyed them by *force majeure*. This anti-Puritan faction was in a majority almost from the start; before the last quarter of the seventeenth century it was in a majority of at least four to one. To it we owe everything of worth that has ever come out of New England. They converted the sour gathering of hell-crazy deacons into the town-meeting; they converted the old pens for torturing little children into public-schools; they set up free speech, free assemblage, a free press, trial by jury, equality before the law, religious freedom, and manhood suffrage; they separated church and state; they broke down the old theology and substituted the rationalism that was to come to flower in New England's Golden Age. The Puritans were absolutely against all of these things. They no more gave them to the Republic than they gave it Franklin or Emerson. What they gave it was something quite different: the shivering dread of the free individual that is still the curse of American civilization. They gave it canned patriotism, comstockery, intolerance of political heresy, Prohibition. They gave it Wilsonism, Burlesonism, and the Ku Klux Klan.

§ 2

The wide dispersion of the Puritan spirit in the United States is sometimes brought forward by defenders of the Puritans as a proof that they are not to be blamed for it—at all events, not wholly. My eminent friend, Prof. Dr. Charles A. Beard, lately made this idea the basis of an article against me in the *New Republic*, in which he accused me

formally of denouncing the Puritans for crimes committed by others. The accusation was quite without merit. Fully ten years ago I printed a treatise upon the Puritan psychology in which I argued (I believe soundly) that it was indistinguishable from the psychology of any other inferior class of men—that what lay at the bottom of most of its characteristic manifestations was what lay at the bottom of democracy, to wit, simply envy of all persons having a better time. As I say, I believe this notion to be valid. It explains, for example, the popularity of Prohibition among yokels. A yokel is unfitted, temperamentally and by habit, to use alcohol in a civilized and charming manner. His concept of that use is colored by memories of sordid debauches in the back-rooms of country doggeries, with fearful headaches following. More, he is uneasily conscious of his incapacity for ingesting the grape in what he conceives to be the manner of city men—that is, in dim, romantic cafés, with great rashers of *Blutwurst*, *Schwartenmagen*, *Sardellen* and other such delicacies on the bar, or with bands playing, red lights on the table, beautiful wenches tripping about, and waiters staggering in with huge trays of cocktails, champagne, and strange, levantine liqueurs. Such refinements are beyond him; he is too stingy and too uncouth for them; he can only go to a jug as a hog goes to its swill. Hence, in the inevitable human manner, he hates the man who can indulge in them, and is hotly in favor of making that indulgence unlawful. This is all there is in Prohibition. Its altruistic motives are afterthoughts, and usually they are as dishonest as its statistics.

So in all other directions. Wherever you find men who envy their more fortunate fellow-men you will find Puritans. Even the original Puritan movement in England was very largely an uprising of an emancipated but still barbarous yeomanry against the county gentry and the court. It was quite as much social as theological. The Puritans, with precious few exceptions,

were of the class which goes to Billy Sunday meetings and joins the Knights of Pythias in America today, and not all the romantic heraldry of their descendants can conceal the fact. Of all the saints who gave the tone of a slaughter-house to the first Puritan settlements in New England, not six were gentlemen by contemporary English standards, and not four were gentlemen in good repute. In Virginia, Maryland and one or two other colonies there were some early immigrants who belonged to the actual gentry—but not nearly so many as American genealogical research seems to indicate. The vast majority, North and South, came from the lower classes—worse, from the lower classes at a time of rising discontent. Thus they were all infected with democratic ideas, and hence with Puritan ideas. The later immigrations, in the main, brought men from even lower categories—Irishmen half starved to death, primeval German Bolsheviks, Jews unable to survive in Russia, Italians but little removed from gorillas. The American people have been bred from such inferior stocks, and the fact shows itself in many of their characteristic weaknesses. Not one American in a thousand can honestly display a family-tree in which any sane man could take pride. The newly rich have to manufacture them by such processes as that of assuming that any child named Sidney, born in 1580, was a son of Sir Philip Sidney. The necessity well exhibits the lack.

But most defenders of Puritanism, it seems to me, greatly underestimate the extent to which the original Puritan stock survives in the United States, and particularly the extent to which it has become dispersed. Years ago, in a modest historical paper, I showed that the population of many of the Southern States is descended, not from the English country gentlemen of sentimental legend, but from dour Puritans of the precise breed of Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards. Even in Maryland, which few Americans ever think of as a Puritan state, Puritans displaced

the original Catholics in the seventeenth century, and many of the present landed gentry of the state, now degenerated to the Methodist level, are descended from these Puritans, and inherit their peculiar habits of mind. In the North and West there was, in the early days of expansion, an even more direct inoculation. As the more civilized New Englanders rose against the Puritan theocracy, and gradually broke its original power, the more intransigent Puritans moved westward into the wilderness, first into New York, and then into the Middle and Far West. The Puritans who remained behind were, in the main, of the wealthier sort, and they slowly acquired the point of view that goes with worldly prosperity, and became ripe for the theological revolution which finally engulfed New England. Their descendants of today still show Puritan stigmata, but intermarriage with more cultured stocks and the long enjoyment of money have toned down their inherited ferocity, and so it is not unusual to find civilized and even charming individuals among them. But the Puritans of the West are descended from ancestors who never came into contact with civilization at all, and they themselves have been aware of it for too short a time to show any effects of it. In consequence, it is in that dreary region that one finds the purest Puritan philosophy today. On lonely farms and in sordid, hoggish factory towns the great-grandchildren of the original bluenoses maintain the old tradition of envy and hatred. Here is the main hatchery of American "idealism," *i.e.*, of American snivelling, pecksniffery, and poltroonery. Here is the citadel of democracy.

But I wander far from Mr. Adams' excellent book, and perhaps do it and him a disservice by failing to say plainly that many of the notions herewith set forth are not in it. It is a painstaking and adept piece of historical writing — well-informed, judicious, good-humored and constantly amusing. It is an admirable antidote to the official rubbish manufactured so

copiously by the dull numskulls of the American Historical Association.

§ 3

Ernest Weekley's "Etymological Dictionary of Modern English" (*Dutton*) is three inches thick and ten inches tall, weighs four or five pounds, and deals with matters that most of us tried to forget when we left school; nevertheless, I have browsed through it at intervals for a month past, and always with edification. The author is enormously learned in the tongues, but he is not without his waggishness, as is shown by his sly statement that the word *fudge* and the surname of Marshal Foch are identical etymologically. Unluckily, he often gets into dubious waters when he tackles Americanisms. For example, consider his etymologies of *caucus*, *boodle*, *graft* and *Yankee*. The origin of *caucus* has been established on direct and incontrovertible evidence: it came from the fact that the first palavers of the earliest professional politicians of Boston were held in a shipyard, and were long called *caulkers' meetings*. But Weekley derives the word from a probably mythical Algonquin term, *caw-cawaas-sough*, a counsellor, quoted by Captain John Smith, the king of all liars. This bogus etymology is in most of the dictionaries. *Graft* he tries to connect with an obsolete English slang verb meaning to dig; it must be obvious that it came instead from the common horticultural verb. In its early stages the term meant to sponge, with an element of deceit added. It still, in fact, has that significance, among others. *Boodle*, according to Weekley, comes from the Dutch word *boedel*, meaning estates or effects. But the first example of its use given by Thornton, in the sense of a corruption fund, goes back only to the 50's of the last century, long after the Dutch influence upon American was done for. It seems to me very much more probable that the word comes from the German *beutel*, a purse. It came in at the precise time that the German vote began to be wooed by

American politicians, and many other German words, *e.g.*, *bum*, *loafer* and *shyster*, were taken into the American political vocabulary simultaneously. When he comes to *caboodle* Weekley grows even more fanciful. He suggests that it is "probably a cowboy word," and guesses that it may be derived from the Portuguese *cabedal*, "a stock, what a man is worth." But it was actually in use in the United States long before there were any cowboys, and certainly the latter, when they eventually appeared, knew nothing of Portuguese. It is my own guess that the word is somehow related to *caboose*, which has been in common use in America for more than a century, though it still remains strange, save in a narrow maritime sense, to Englishmen. It was once commonly joined to *kit* in the phrase, "the whole kit and caboodle." By a well-known phonological process *ca* was assimilated to *kit*, and the phrase became "the whole kit and boodle." Thus *boodle* also came into the language by a different route, but in this sense it has lost all precise meaning. The other *boodle* is probably a quite distinct word, and, as I say, probably comes from the German *beutel*. Weekley derives *Yankee* from the Dutch given name, *Jan*. He says that it may either be a diminutive of *Jan* (compare *Jenkin* from *John*), or a form of the Dutch *Jan Kes*, a sort of diminutive of *Jan Cornelius*. But the etymology usually given in the dictionaries seems to me to be much more plausible. This derives the word from an Indian mispronunciation of the word *English*. It was, in fact, the English colonists who were called Yankees, in the earliest days of the word; never the Dutch.

But I shut down for fear of boring you. Etymology is a dull subject, despite its occasional touches of low comedy. No wonder it is chiefly pursued by pedagogues!

§ 4

In his "Social Chaos and the Way Out" (*Henderson*), Alfred Baker Read,

an English sociologist, takes 364 large pages to argue that Christendom would be a great deal better off if infanticide were made legal, as it seems to be in China. The realistic Chinese, when the angels bring them a child that is sickly, defective or otherwise unwelcome, hold it under water for three minutes, and then quietly bury it. It is their theory that, in its first few weeks, it is scarcely to be regarded as a human being at all, and that its orderly execution is thus an act that falls decidedly short of murder. The theory seems harsh to Christians, and yet it is surely no harsher than the Christian doctrine that a child which dies unbaptized will go to hell. Nor is it much worse, fundamentally, than the widespread Christian practise of interfering with the life process before instead of after birth—a practise now so widespread that the management of it has become a definite surgical specialty, and whole hospitals are chiefly given over to it. The effects of their franker technique upon the Chinese themselves have been described by a recent observer. The death-rate among Chinese less than one year old, he says, is truly enormous, but after that it is very low, and almost every Chinaman who grows up at all survives to old age. In other words, the unfit are stamped out by artificial selection, and their disappearance saves the Chinese all that burden of sickness which rests so heavily upon Christians. In Christendom, says Mr. Read, it is precisely the unfit who are most jealously nursed and kept alive. Christian medicine devotes itself to them almost fanatically; the last spark of life in them is fanned with tremendous energy, and at enormous expense. Hence the multiplication of sanatoria, hospitals, and homes for the incurable. Mr. Read believes that this sentimentality is crippling civilization, and that the best way to get rid of all the cost and trouble would be to make infanticide lawful.

Unluckily, the learned uplifter attempts to promote his cause from the wrong direction. That an artificial augmentation of the normal hazards of in-

fancy would improve the average quality of the human race is too obvious to need argument, despite the maudlin plea, so often heard, that the child who is so sickly that it has to be kept alive with a pulmotor sometimes develops after puberty into a bishop, a movie star or a United States Senator. But when Mr. Read proposes that infanticide be made legal, he ranges himself against the prevailing stream of thought in Christendom, and is thus doomed to disaster. That stream tends, as everyone knows, not toward giving legality to anything that is done, but toward making more and more things *illegal*. Its goal seems to be the creation of an ideal body of laws, none of them obeyed by anyone. Thus, if it were really desired to make infanticide popular, perhaps the best way to do so would be to pass special laws against it, and put their execution into the hands of a special police force. That police force, like the special Prohibition brigade, would naturally attract scoundrels, and in a few months there would be a regular schedule of prices for permits to violate the law. To kill an ordinary girl baby: \$2. A boy: \$3. Twins: \$5, regardless of sex. Triplets and beyond: free, with the compliments of the Infanticide Commissioner. No doubt the scale I suggest is too low. If it now costs \$20 a gallon, as I hear, to get gin past the state and federal guardians, no doubt it would eventually cost \$50 or \$100 to put a baby out of its misery, and this would make it impossible for any but the rich to practise the art. Well, why not? It is the democratic theory that the rich are all villains, and that their progeny inherit their villainy. Any scheme to promote the death-rate among them should thus have the support of all 100% Americans.

At present there is no special law against infanticide; it is simply regarded as a form of murder. As a result, the punishment provided by law is out of all proportion to the offense, save in extraordinary cases, and so it is almost unheard of for a person accused of the crime to be punished. This is

particularly true when the culprit is the mother of the infant—say a poor working girl betrayed by some rascally shoe-drummer or Sunday-school superintendent. As Mr. Read shows, it is the almost invariable habit of English coroner's juries to set the accused free in such cases, even when she confesses. To achieve this they often have to torture the facts horribly—finding, for example, that the baby was strangled "by some person or persons unknown," or that it died of measles while immersed in a bucket of water. In this country the thing is more brilliantly ordered. If the District Attorney is ambitious and has no more tempting sensation before him, he has the poor girl indicted and duly placed on trial. Then begins a familiar clown-show. Psychiatrists with gold pince-nez and close-clipped Van Dyke beards step up to testify that she is irresponsible; sob sisters visit her in jail, and tell the sad story of her romance and betrayal; women's clubs pass resolutions demanding that she be turned loose at once, and the author of her shame taken and hanged. In the end, she departs for Los Angeles and an artistic career with twenty proposals of marriage, five trunks full of clothes, and a sight draft for \$400. Mr. Read's proposed law would rob the booboisie of all this entertainment. His suggestion is evil, and should be scorned.

§ 5

Published three years ago, or even two years ago, John Dos Passos' "Three Soldiers" (*Doran*) would have been suppressed out of hand, and the author hurried to Leavenworth or Atlanta, with a Federal judge bawling obscene farewells to him from the bench. Even as it stands, it shows the marks of a good deal of discreet trimming; in fact, the publishers admit openly, over their sign manual, that they induced Mr. Dos Passos to tone it down somewhat before he departed for Europe and safety, and that they themselves continued the process after he had left. Nevertheless, the thing still has enough frankness to make it stand

clearly above the general level of American novels. It is a serious attempt to picture the war, not as it appeared to newspaper editorial writers denouncing the Hun, or to bankers' committees forcing Liberty Loans on the yokels at a personal profit of 3 or 4%, or to sentimental women parading the streets in grotesque uniforms, or to four-minute spellbinders in movie parlors, but to three young men who actually served in it, as the author did himself. It is a picture somehow disconcerting. The theory of the time was that service would be of great spiritual and intellectual benefit to the conscripts, whatever the risk to their skins—that it would elevate and mellow them to be parts of so knightly an organization as the Army, and to take part in so noble a cause as the struggle to preserve democracy, the Word of God, and the French and English loans. But the fact seems to be that the Army quickly acquired the tone, not of a crusade of Geoffrey de Bouillons, but of a Billy Sunday revival, a chautauqua, a convention of Rotary Clubs, a woman-flogging session of the Ku Klux Klan. In other words, most of the efforts of its managers were devoted, not to making the conscripts gallant and brave, but simply to making them swallow all sorts of childish piffle about the enemy. The aim, it would seem, was to augment their resolution by scaring them to death—by trying to make them believe that if they ever fell into the hands of that enemy they would be relieved of their ears and teeth, beaten with clubs, and boiled in oil. The ideal soldier, by this system, was the one who most quickly acquired the imbecility of a Y. M. C. A. secretary or a college professor working for the Creel-Wilson-Hog Island press bureau.

It is an unfortunate fact—to be deplored, I hope, by future historians—that the American people got so little of spiritual value out of the war. I am a firm believer in war, and regard it as the most effective of all antidotes to the sickly sordidness of Christian civili-

zation. It lifts men above all their usual puerile fears and uncertainties, and gives them something to be genuinely afraid of; it brings out qualities of a rare and lofty variety, wholly obscured by the daily routine of life. But it must be obvious that it is possible to enter even a great and brilliant war in a manner so discreditable that all of the advantages of the enterprise will be lost. It was in this way that the United States entered the war of 1914-1918. We hung back for three long years, meanwhile robbing the Allies in a manner unparalleled in history. We hid behind a neutrality that was dishonest and knavish. Then we marched in against a foe already beset by odds of at least two to one, and gave him the *coup de grace* at odds of at least four to one. Meanwhile, the great majority of Americans who were liable to military duty tried to get out of it, and those who succeeded devoted themselves riotously to plunder. Not only the so-called profiteers fought for the loot; the honest laboring man, within the limits of his opportunities, was just as eager. And over all we had a *Kriegherr* who drenched the world with streams of pious balderdash so sickening that even our allies began to gag. In brief, a war with no more gallantry in it than a lynching, and no more dignity than an auction sale. Is it any wonder that its chief psychic effect has been the horizontal degradation of the whole American people, so that they become by-words in the world for hypocrisy and sharp-dealing, and so far forget the ideas the Fathers of the Republic fought for that they accept any invasion of their old liberties, however gross, with scarcely a protest?

Mr. Dos Passos takes three young Americans, each typical of a large class, and shows their progress through this great machine. It is not a pleasant picture; I do not recommend the book for lazy reading on a Sabbath afternoon. But a passion for the truth is plainly there, and with it an imagination that makes that truth live.



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* * *
FROM THE cover on the book.
* * *
HOW THE story.
* * *
IS GOING to turn out.
* * *
THE OTHER night f'rinstance.
* * *
I WATCHED the customers.
* * *
AT A news and cigar stand.
* * *
AND A clerical gentleman.
* * *
BOUGHT A copy.
* * *
OF "RACY Yarns".
* * *
AND A gay thing bought.
* * *
THE "ANTHROPOLOGICAL Review".
* * *
AND A six-foot husk.
* * *
THE "LADIES Boon Companion"
* * *
SO WHEN a limousine.
* * *
STOPPED TO demobilize.
* * *
A DIGNIFIED Wall Streeter.
* * *
IN A cutaway coat.
* * *
I THOUGHT to myself
* * *
AS HE steered for the cigars.
* * *
"HERE'S WHERE I get,
* * *
A REGULAR thrill.
* * *

THIS MAN won't stop.
* * *
AT ANYTHING under.
* * *
A DOLLAR Havana".
* * *
BUT NO, Watson.
* * *
YOU'RE ALL wrong.
* * *
HE SLAPPED down two dimes.
* * *
AND SAID in a loud voice,
* * *
"GIVE ME a package.
* * *
OF THOSE cigarettes.
* * *
THAT SATISFY."
* * *



WALL Streeter or not, you're looking for twenty cents' worth for twenty cents, aren't you? Here's where you get it *plus*. Best of Turkish blended with the best of Burley and other choice Domestic tobaccos—and blended *right!* No wonder the wise ones pick the "satisfy-blend".

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